MUTUAL SELF CREATION:

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL METAPHOR

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PREFACE

Although presented in the form of an argument, this book is more an artifact than it is an essay in the traditional sense. I am presenting an image of truth in the same way that a novelist or a painter does, and not in the way that a scholar ordinarily would. Nowhere do I "prove" anything, nor do I believe that the topics under consideration are amenable to proof. Nor do I present a scholarly historical survey of the main concepts that appear in the text.

Indeed, the view of evidence I have taken comes from the tradition of phenomenology. Experience itself is considered to be the source of legitimating evidence. Throughout the book I allow my experience to speak for itself and to seek confirmation or correction from your experience.

I could have chosen many different fields of knowledge to exemplify mutual self creation. I chose the ones I did for rhetorical reasons as much as any others. Social psychology, evolution and ecology are bywords of popular intellectual mythology, while perception is a key concept in our understanding of self-world relationships. Therefore demonstrating mutual self creation in these fields has persuasive power. The choice was made for the clari y and effectiveness of the metaphor.

Throughout the book I refer to mutual self creation as a <u>metaphor</u> for a relation given in experience. The whole book should

be taken as a metaphor for this relation. I attempt to present an image of reality in an honest and convincing fashion just as a sculptor or playwright does. I have sought to write a meaningful and helpful metaphor, not a conclusive argument or an exhaustive study.

INTRODUCTION

A Personal Search for Change

This book emerges from a profound struggle in my own life. It has been plain to me for many years that our culture is inadequate, that we are destroying both our environment and ourselves by our way of life. Criticizing this culture is an easy and popular task. But what value does criticism have if it cannot lead to constructive action? What good does it do to say "no" if there is no subsequent "yes"?

Critique is valuable and creative only if we can build on the cleared ground, yet the critics of our culture are all too often unable to provide a foundation for growth:

> The critical theory of society possesses no concepts which could bridge the gap between the present and its future; holding no promise and showing no success, it remains negative. Thus it wants to remain loyal to those who, without hope, have given and give their life to the great refusal.[1]

When Herbert Marcuse, the American Master of Critical Theory, penned these words in 1964, I was 15 years old, and staring the future in the face. Vietnam was stirring in high-school halls, marijuana and sex loomed on the horizon, and LSD was a strange story in a scientific journal. But at fifteen everyone knows what Marcuse had forgotten: we must live into the future; pure negation is . . . nothing. The future is inherently opaque, unknown and from this unknown comes hope, freedom and creative potential.

My own path toward creating a new position had already begun, as naively as any 15 year old could begin: I took part in Civil Rights marches, standing with thousands in Lafayette Square in Washington to support the marchers in Selma. Four scenes along this path stand out for me.

Scene 1

When I was 16 I worked in the Cardozo district of Washington, D.C., at that time a hard core black slum ghetto. It was my first first-hand encounter with poverty.

Before the program in which I took part, there was a training session for all the workers in neighborhood programs city-side. A large, racially mixed group had been in seminars all day, in a funky Baptist church somewhere downtown. We reconvened in the main church to share what we had learned. One of the big problems for all the programs was recruitment. There was little neighborhood spirit in any of the areas in which we would work, there was even less trust of government sponsored programs. We were to begin our work going door to door enlisting support and participation.

Since my program was for children 2 - 16, my first job was to be talking to parents to convince them to let their children take part. The leader of the training sessions suggested some role-playing in front of the whole group of perhaps a thousand people. I was chosen.

A woman who had lived in Cardozo all her life role-played a local parent. The opening of the interview went smoothly. I was courteous and unembarrassed; she was willing to talk. In the middle of my explanation of the program she interrupted to ask: "What's in

this for you?" "Nothing," I said. "Well why does a kid like you, with all you need in life, want to come down here and mess with my kids for no pay?" she responded. I replied "I want to help you." "What makes you think I need your help! Or that you can help me!" she snapped angrily as she slammed the simulated door in my face. The interview was over. Who the hell did I think I was?

Scene 2

The place was the Oakland Armory, in the Fall of 1967. At that time the Armory was swallowing draftees in mouthsful of thousands every week. On this drizzly November day, several thousand people had gathered there to block an induction and to express our outrage. In the early, cold morning, we huddled in the street outside the building. The busses drew up to our massed bodies. Confusion reigned. Soon a bull-horned voice was heard: "In the name of the people of the State of California, we order you to disperse." With one throat the unrehearsed answer roared back: "We are the people of the State of California." Many heads were cracked that day. I smelled tear gas for the first time.

Scene 3

February of 1969. Four hundred or so students of Stanford University had seized the Applied Electronics Laboratory (AEL) on the campus, backed by perhaps a thousand sympathizers who were willing to vote at meetings and to be there on-and-off during the day, but not to sleep there at night. We stayed a week.

One night, a friend of mine and I whiled away the time late one night reading T. S. Eliot's Four Quartets out loud. In the middle of the second quartet, a campus policeman stopped his patrol and stood silently, listening to the poetry, for nearly two hours.

Living in that building was a communal event as much as a political one. There was an extraordinary sense of belonging together, of sharing danger, excitement, fatigue and boredom. Many of us had never experienced such closeness, even in our families. None of us, at that time, were able to articulate the community or its importance to us.

Three days after AEL was abandoned, thirty of the "heaviest" of the radicals occupied another building, this time without mass support. They broke through huge panes of glass and thoroughly vandalized the building. They were quickly arrested, none too gently, by the police. Our incipient community was shattered by this event and the bitter differences of opinion and allegiance it caused. We missed the real, radical meaning of AEL and lost our chance to build a genuinely revolutionary corps. Though it struggled on for nearly five years, "The Movement" at Stanford had died.

Scene 4

It is now spring of 1970. Five thousand angry people gathered in the twilight in Frost Amphitheater. The grass-covered terraces were bright green; the air was clear, revealing the rounded hills rising over the spire of Hoover Tower, the lush trees surrounding the amphitheater were buzzing with early crickets and tree frogs. We had all just come from our television sets, having heard Richard Nixon announce the invasion of Cambodia. In disbelief we sought the comfort of numbers: the National Student Strike was about to being. The meeting itself was short, simple and unsatisfying; "no business as usual," was the decision. The campus was to be closed to the ordinary: while the Cambodia "intervention" lasted we would dedicate our time to ending it and to addressing its causes.

As the meeting broke up, nearly everyone went home, but two groups remained abroad. One was the Progressive Labor Party (PLP), the "heavy rads" of this era. The other was a group of "non-violent revolutionaries." A third group quickly arrived - the police, armed with heavy-duty riot gear. The main battle plan was clear: PLP will attempt to trash the campus; the police will attempt to trash PLP. The rest of us, a pitifully small band of twenty-five or so, were determined to stop the conflict. We stood in front of Encina, between the two groups of combatants. The police stood in ranks, truncheons drawn, tear-gas guns out, hip-pistols unsnapped for quick draw. The PLP was a jumble of bodies, leaping and taunting. For nearly four hours we roamed the campus, putting ourselves between the armies when we could. We were too few; both other groups were interested in battle. In the early morning hours I dragged myself to the relatively gas-free air of a dorm room. As I looked at the woman whose room it was (the woman who now is my wife), I wondered, "Which side am I on? Are there really two sides fighting out there? The army is destroying Cambodia to save it; PLP is destroying the campus to save it. Tweedledum and Tweedledee always fight each other."

An Emerging Position

Slowly, in the midst of these and other experiences, a light began to dawn: both "sides" to the conflict shared assumptions and structures of experience at far deeper levels than that of the conflict itself. No matter who "won" on a political level, more would stay the same than would change.

At the same time, I was beginning to have flashes of another way of experiencing. Drug experiences with LSD, mescaline and psylocybin were partly responsible for my new insights. Developing spiritual discipline through meditation played its role. Some remarkable experiences of mutual awareness and interaction in theatrical ensembles, too, moved me along my way. Taking up backpacking and returning to my maternal grandfather's love and interrelationship with the great web of nature provided another strand. Out of all these dimensions of experience, coupled with many hours of disciplined reading, I began to frame a hypothesis: the pervading alienation of our culture, and our culture's habitual attempt to dominate the "other" (be it "nature," or "other races," or "other economic systems") are rooted in the structure of experience as it is learned in acculturation. There are other ways of experiencing; I was discovering some and I could read about others in any anthropological case study. The question was how to have an effect at the level of culturally learned structures of experience on a culture-wide basis.

The work presented here reflects my attempt to answer that question. The metaphor of mutual self creation is an alternative image of the structure of existence, an alternative to the structural images that dominate our culture. It is presented not as a final image of Truth, but as a helpful tool in a process of transformation and growth.

My intention is to create a position, much as an artist does. I am focusing on critique, but developing a positive statement. Although what I am sayins has many connections with other people's writings,

I am not concerned with carrying on a tradition, nor am I negating or arguing with one. When a position is founded on a negation, it always resembles that negation; the new then fits the old much as a glove fits a hand.

At the same time I emphasize the "newness" of mutual self creation, I must also stress its commonplace character in twentieth century thought. Everyone I talk to about this book has another author I "just have to read" because their work is completely in line with what I am saying. It seems to me that mutual self creation is a relationship implied by and often buried in most of the great discoveries of this century from physics to philosophy to psychology. We simply have not reflected on the relationship itself and ont its implications. This, then, is what the book is about: a new way of understanding relationship and of being related.

An Outline of the Chapters

In this book I will introduce and clarify a metaphor I call "mutual self creation." I have developed this metaphor to describe what I take to be a fundamental relationship, given in experience, that is neither causal nor dialectical. In such relationships, the relata mutually depend on one another for their existence, in such a way that neither can exist or come into being without the other.

In Book 1, I present the metaphor, give evidence to substantiate it, and discuss its scope of applicability. Chapter I clarifies mutual self creation by providing examples from social psychology and from evolutionary and ecological theory. Chapter II demonstrates that human perception is generated through a network of mutual self creation.

Chapter III discusses significance, meaning and language from the perspective of mutual self creation. Chapter IV pursues the theme of evidence first developed in Chapter III and shows us an image of human experience as a whole as an inclusive, open network of mutual self creation. Chapter V summarizes Book 1. In it I also present evidence that the physical universe is organized according to mutual self creation. Book 1 then ends with a challenge for us to recognize mutual self creation as a basic relationship and to integrate it into our daily experience.

In Book 2, I take up this challenge, grappling with some consequences of mutual self creation for ethics, politics, and spirituality. Chapter I deals with ethics, Chapter II with politics, and Chapter III with spirituality. By the time that we have arrived at Book 2, however, we will have discovered that these three "areas" can only be separated from one another artificially. They are, in fact, elements in a network of mutual self creation and can be understood adequately only in their interpenetrating relationships with one another. Integrating mutual self creation in daily life involves fundamental changes in the way we organize our perception. Experience is mutable, not merely given but made even at structural levels. Since our culture is not oriented toward mutual self creation, individuals may check my statements with their experience and find no confirmation, yet the statements may still be accurate. I am talking in large measure about <u>potential transformation</u> of experience. In the Afterword I provide some games and exercises for people who are interested in exploring experientially the concepts presented in the main text. Although many of these exercises

are elementary, many can also contribute to the explorations of those already engaged in this transformative process.

Mutual Self Creation, "Interaction," and "Dialectic"

Many people have asked me, in conversations about my ideas, why I feel the need to coin a new term. "Why not 'interactive'?" they ask, or if they come from another conceptual tradition, "Why not 'dialectic'?" I use mutual self creation for two reasons. The first is that it seems to name the relation as accurately as possible. The second is that other terms have metaphysical or political liabilities too great for me to overcome.

Mutual self creation seems appropriate because I aim to describe a relationship in which entities participate in each others' being and becoming to the very core of their existence. The relationship is mutual: no party to it has priority. The relationship is creative: it involves the transformation and active coming into being of its members. It is self-creative because the whole network creates its identity and that of each of its members through their interpenetrative relationships. Thus I arrived at the name mutual self creation.

"Interaction" seems inappropriate because of its metaphysical implications. Interaction implies that there are two or more independent entities which then are brought into relationship and "interact" with one another. On the contrary, I wish to insist that relationships are as primal as the entities involved in them. In fact, I would hold that entities and relations are inseparable and mutually imply one another.

"Dialectics" seems inappropriate for two reasons, one philosophical and the other political. Philosophically "dialectic" has a perfectly clear meaning: proceeding by negation and synthesis. This is a useful meaning, for there is indeed thought of this kind and some phenomena seem to correspond to it. If "dialectics" became the name for what I call "mutual self creation," we would need another name for "dialectics." At the same time, I must admit that a good deal of my thought can be traced back to Marx and his work on consciousness and society. There is a tradition of continental Marxism which has carried on his work on the mutual interpenetration of individual human awareness with that of others and with the social forms of their relationships. This tradition tends to use "dialectics" to describe what they do, and to describe the form of relationships with which they deal. Herbert Marcuse, Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, and Jurgen Habermas all have ties to this tradition.[2] People in this tradition may disagree with my choice of terms, for their work definitely involves complexly interacting wholes such as those of which I speak. Nonetheless, dialectics retains difficulties even if one throws off my first aversion to it.

First, "dialectic," deriving as it does from the idea of negation, tends to have overtones of dichotomous thought. It is all too easy to let a complex involving multiple factors to dissolve into a simple dichotomy between two factors engaged in a "dialectical" relationship. This is what has happened, for instance, in Berger and Luckmann's The Social Construction of Reality.

Second, "dialectic" carries with it, in this country, strong overtones of "communism." The emotional and political reactions caused

by these overtones prevent people, on both the political left and right, from being able to investigate the topic clearly. Battles over labels are ideological and pointless. I hope, in this work, to draw attention to the thing itself: to the actual fact of our experience of mutual self creation. This fact does not depend on political affiliation, and its consequences are neither capitalist nor communist, in the sense these words have in world politics. To allow a clear presentation of the concepts and issues involved, it seems important not to interject any interpretation of "dialectics" into the discussion.

Language

Before plunging ahead with the text, I must issue one warning to the reader. Language is a sticky business at best, and when we can't look one another in the face it's even stickier than usual. Speaking is a complex situation in which we listen and talk (and listen to ourselves talk) which always involves at least two of us with each other, and in which we each affect the course of the conversation. Conversation is, in fact, a nexus of mutual self creation.

Now writing is a particularly distant form of conversation. Books do not look like "moments of speech" at all. They look like things, not objects. We forget that there is no ETERNAL TRUTH that can be spoken by any one person. We forget that the measure of successful speaking is communicating. Communicating is a form of involvement in which sending and receiving are mutually responsive from start to finish. The purpose of this piece is to be part of talking together about important questions in our lives, and not to be a fixed image of reality.

Speaking tends to be a linear process, the words coming one at a time. Writing/reading is perhaps the most linear speech there is. Language, of course, is another matter. Language is a nexus of mutual self creation in which every work has its impact and every grammatical usage its effect on the structural whole. Every speech act plays its role as the language grows and changes.

We never speak a whole language except implicitly, as the context for our particular acts of speaking. We often forget that, by virtue of this context, every speaking speaks the whole language, and that every reference to the world refers to the whole world as the context for whatever part of it we are explicitly talking about.

"Mutual self creation" resembles those forgotten contexts. It is not a linear or causal phenomenon. It does not lend itself well to spoken metaphor and its meaning often seems to lurk boldly, but indistinctly, just beyond whatever light the metaphor of the moment casts. Neither our habits of language nor our habits of perception are well suited to understanding mutual self creation, and we will meet with continual frustration because of this throughout the work. Nonetheless, perseverance can bring a measure of success.

Lao-tze, the legendary sage who compiled the Tao Teh Ching, placed the following sentence at the beginning of a rather lengthy book on the Tao.

"The Tao described in words is not the real Tao."[3]

Why then does he go on to speak of Tao at such length? Perhaps we have forgotten the true relationship of speech to the spoken. No experience can be adequately spoken. Try, for instance, to give an

adequate description of your last cup of coffee, or tea, or what have you. We have been bamboozled, perhaps by the fuss over "ineffable" mystical experience, into losing track of this simple fact: all experience is ineffable. As Korzybski said, "The map is not the territory." Another way of saying the same thing is to point out that what I am saying is not what I am talking about. For example, the coffee described in words is not the real coffee.

All statements about reality are "not-true" to that reality. They are only models, which must always leave our important truths. On the other hand, some statements about reality are <u>false</u>. When Lao-tze affirms that "The Tao described in words is not the real Tao," and then proceeds to speak of the Tao, he places his comments in the real of the <u>not false</u>. Knowing that what I say is not-true, I intend to speak in a way that is not false.

As Chuang-tze, another early Taoist sage, wrote

> The fish trap exists because of the fish; once you've gotten the fish you can forget the trap. The rabbit snare exists because of the rabbit; once you've gotten the rabbit, you can forget the snare. Words exist because of meaning; once you've gotten the meaning, you can forget the words. Where can I find a man who has forgotten words so I can have a word with him?[4]

BOOK 1

INTRODUCTION

In this Book I introduce and discuss the concept of "mutual self creation." At a minimum, I intend to uphold the following: several major discoveries of the 20th century exhibit the form of mutual self creation. At a maximum, I wish to suggest this: mutual self creation is to the universe understood ecologically as causality is to the universe understood mechanically.

Formally, a relationship is mutually self creative when its members cannot arise independently from one another, but must arise in relation to one another. Although it is a difficult idea to grasp at first, this sort of relationship is prevalent throughout our experience, and, in fact, characterizes relationships which lie at the foundation of our existence as human beings.

My first steps toward conceiving this relationship began when I encountered such impenetrable dichotomies as mind and body, thought and action, freedom and conditioning, acculturation and individuation. Finally it occurred to me that the problem might lie in casting these terms as conflicting dichotomies. Perhaps at a deep level these phenomena are mutually supportive and non-contradictory - non-dual, as the Buddhists say.

This is not a form of reductionism. We should avoid the mistake of assuming that one term is a condition, or cause, of the other (for example, that body is the cause or explanation of mind). The challenge is to come to grips with relationships in which entities remain

distinct yet in which they mutually penetrate one another fundamentally. The image of mutual self creation attempts to do justice to the simultaneous uniqueness and participation of every member in a relationship.

In Chapter I, I present some examples of relations of mutual self creation. In the first half of the chapter, the examples are drawn from Sociology and Psychology. In the second half, the examples are drawn from Ecology and from Evolution Theory. The point of this chapter is to demonstrate that there are widely accepted fields of data and widely held theories that exhibit the formal characteristics of mutual self creation.

In Chapter II, I will discuss Perception. We will find that perception, too, exhibits the form of mutual self creation, in two ways. Perception is the expression or result of the interaction of a complex network of mutual self creation. The relation among the members of the perceptual field is also one of mutual self creation.

In Chapter II we will learn that perception is not a registration of an "outside world" but an active constructive process. This process is not fixed, but is potentially mutable even in terms of many of its basic structures.

Chapter II will highlight the role of language and culture in constructing our ordinary perception. Chapter III will explore the theme of significance, meaning and language in greater detail. In this chapter, I will begin to address this problem: since perception is partly based on culture and language, how can people from different cultures (or even from different perceptual traditions within a culture) agree on what is evident and what is not? What counts as evidence if perception does not provide us with a stable, objective basis?

This question provides a springboard to Chapter IV, in which I consider the nature of evidence and its roots in direct experience, from the standpoint of mutual self creation. In this chapter I will develop an image of experience as a single network of mutual self creation that is at once multi-sensory, synaesthetic, flowing and open. Experience is a non-dual, creative whole.

Chapter V presents a summary of the first four chapters, and adds a brief overview of recent developments in Physics suggesting that the physical universe, too, displays mutual self creation in its fundamental structures. Book 1 ends with a question. If it is true that we are creatures engaged fundamentally in relationships of mutual self creation in a universe itself mutually self creative, what implications does this have for our ethical, political and spiritual ideas and activities?

CHAPTER I

TWO EXAMPLES

Two examples may help to clarify your own experience of mutual self creation. The first is the relationship between human individuation and human society. The second is the relationship among members of an evolving ecosystem.

Individuation and Society

Although there is great disagreement among Sociologists, and among Psychologists, and even greater disagreement (if possible) between Sociologists and Psychologists, nevertheless there are a few simple statements to which practically all members of both professions would ascribe.

One of these statements is that human individuation can only take place in a social context in which the developing human is in interaction with other people. Another is that society is composed of individual people, their behaviors, their beliefs and their artifacts. These two statements, taken together, form a conundrum: individuals cannot come into existence without society; but society must be composed of individuals!

Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, in their landmark book, The Social Construction of Reality, have given the problem its tersest statement to date:

> Society is a human product. Society is an objective reality. Man is a social product.[1]

Just to check out my assertion above that "practically all members of both professions" would ascribe to some such statements, I went down to UC Berkeley. There I checked the elementary Psychology and Sociology texts currently being used, plus a few other elementary texts that were in the bookstore or on the library shelf. I allowed myself only the briefest time to scan the books, yet in each text, nearly always close to the beginning of the book, or of an important chapter, there was what I was looking for.

For example, from Psychology, 2nd Ed., p. 611, the first page of Chapter 2:

> Without assistance and cooperation from others none of us would survive. From birth - indeed from the moment of conception - each of us is dependent upon others to provide vital necessities, as well as those experiences that create a sense of personal well-being and happiness.
>
> In previous chapters we saw how all humans are interdependent.[2]

Or, from Sociology: Man in Society (sorry women!):

> The human group is to the sociologist what the living organism is to the biologist - the fundamental object of scientific analysis . . . the general definition of a group is a number of individuals who interact recurrently according to some pattern of social organization . . .[3]

A complete report of my little survey and a list of resources for anyone who would like data to support these propositions is provided in Note 4.[4]

Of course, if you are a psychologist, or a sociologist, these single statements aren't too valuable. For them the question is how, exactly, these two factors are intertwined in some particular case, or in many cases, or even "in general." Here I am not concerned with these questions. I want simply to look at the relationship implied by this simultaneous affirmation: individuals can be formed only in society while society can only be composed of individuals.

I have often read and heard it said, "Just as molecules are made of atoms, so are societies made of individuals. Just as organic chemistry has laws distinct from those of atomic physics, so sociology has laws distinct from those of psychology." Although this metaphor is tempting, it is misleading.

It is true (at least according to the most popular modern model) that molecules are composed of atoms. It is not true, however, that atoms cannot exist unless they are formed in organic molecules.

This is the curious situation with human individuals and societies. Societies are composed of individuals who cannot come into existence except through the medium of a society! Herein lies the difference between the model of mutual self creation and the model of mechanical connection. Things connected according to a mechanical model are "made up" of one another like the pyramids are made up of blocks of stone. Atoms are thought of as the "bricks" or bits of which molecules are made up according to the laws of atomic interaction.

It will not do to think of individual humans as bits out of which societies are made. Anyone can imagine atoms existing in conditions under which molecular chemistry is irrelevant.[5] No one can imagine human individuals existing in conditions in which human society is irrelevant. Such society may be shunned, it may be unavailable, but it will never be of no consequence.

Moreover, though any individual, once "grown" may exist apart from other people, can be a hermit or a solitary space traveler, no one can become "grown" in such isolation. Nor can human individuality continue through generation except in society. One generation composed entirely of sole hermits would effectively end the species.

Another way to consider the difference between mutual self creation and mechanical connection is temporally. We can imagine atoms as pre-existing any combinations of atoms. When we think about human evolution, on the other hand, we cannot imagine that there were first "individuals" who then somehow "gathered together" into societies. Nor can we believe that first society came into being among some brutish beasts of no self experience who then gradually were raised to individuality. We must envision individuality and sociality evolving together. There is little doubt, for instance, that the rise of social cooperation which allowed early hominids to hunt big game played a crucial role in the development of ever larger brains and mental capacity, that social forces and the need for social cooperation played its part in the evolution of human females' unique estrus cycle, that the discovery of fire transformed the social value of older and weaker people, and that tools and tool use, too, became forces of natural selection influencing the very genetic development of the species.

> Many factors went into the shaping of Homo erectus (NB - one of our ancestors living ca 750,000 years ago) - big-game hunting, fire, selection for bigger brains, prolonged infant . . . dependency, loss of estrus, the coming of the family and taboos and traditions. Each factor contributed in an important way to his (sic) development. But the fundamental problem is to see things as a whole and not as "factors," as parts of the web or network of increasingly complex interrelationships which is human evolution.[6]

In fact, as we will see in the next section of this chapter, general evolutionary theory itself presents compelling evidence for mutual self creation.[7]

Before moving on to the second example, let's recapitulate what we have found so far. Modern social science seems to have deeply shared assumptions that individuals can only develop in a society which

itself must be composed of individuals. Scientific evidence and common sense agree that this must be the case.

Whether we view individuals and societies at a moment in time, or whether we view them in the longest evolutionary glance, we find that neither can exist or come into being without the other. Neither can cause the other. Nor are individual and society in any sense dialectical negations of one another. They are mutual preconditions.

Human beings, in our deep selves, experience our lives as unique personal stories. We also find ourselves always born into ongoing social groups and patterns by which we are constrained and in which we constrain. Insofar as we are individual and social beings, we form and maintain ourselves in mutual self creation.

Evolution and Ecology

Like Psychology and Sociology, Evolutionary Theory and Ecology are fundamentally grounded on an image of mutual self creation. Also like Psychology and Sociology, Evolutionary Theory and Ecology are largely blind to the formal uniqueness of this model and its profound significance.

The first clear images I had of mutual self creation were images of the interrelation of living beings. In an ecosystem, every element is in some way connected to every other. If the phytoplankton in a lake are overfed by phosphorous pollution, they will overpopulate, consume the supply of some critical nutrient or mineral in the lake, and suffocate most of the living lake population.[8] If DDT is sprayed on crops and enters the water table and the food cycle, birds begin to be unable to form adequate egg shells. If the birds die off . . . and so it goes.[9]

In such a system, a change in one element brings change in every element, and each of those changes in turn brings further changes in every element, which changes themselves bring change. This ongoing process of changing changes within a system of connected entities is called, in the natural world, evolution.

Of course, ecosystems are integrated so that they tend to return to homeostasis when disturbed.[10] This tendency is, however, prevalent only over the short term. When we take the long perspective we see that ecosystems and the biosphere as a whole tend to change and develop radically.

On the other hand, ecological treatises and essays on evolution seldom talk about these complex forms of mutual relationship or about their significance. Nonetheless, I felt sure that if I turned to elementary textbooks, I would again find basic statements exemplifying mutual self creation.

My first source was Eugene P. Odom's Principles of Ecology, a standard text for ecology students (undergrad and grad) at UC Berkeley. The first sentence of Chapter 2: Principles and Concepts Pertaining to the Ecosystem is:

> Living organisms and their nonliving (abiotic) environment are inseparably interrelated and interact upon each other.[11]

Not only are living things mutually penetrative, but: "As a general principle we can point out that from the operational standpoint the living and nonliving parts of ecosystems are so interwoven into the fabric of nature that it is difficult to separate them . . . "[12]

Reflecting on all this, it occurred to me that these facts were relevant to evolution. The test of an organism or a species is how well it fits in with the rest of the ecosystem. "There has been an evolution of fitting together."[13]

> Adaptation has produced living forms in tune with the requirements of their total environment. The complexity of the total environment explains the complexity of adaptation and the necessary compromises between adaptations to conflicting environmental forces. All living organisms live in an environment comprised of the physical and biotic influences of their particular ecosystem and are adapted in an extremely complex way to the matrix of interacting factors . . . [14]

Perhaps we should revise the old slogan "survival of the fittest"; contemporary evidence shows the "survival of those that fit." Gregory Bateson often quotes Ashby's mathematical work to the effect that, in complex interactive systems, maximization of <u>any</u> variable leads to irreversible changes in the system, which changes, among other things, create limits on the maximizing variable.[15]

> The redwood forest works toward optima, not maxima. Its needs are satiable, and too much of anything is toxic.[16]

Cooperation, not domination, is the rule of survival.

Mutual self creation appears at whatever bio-ecological level one chooses to look. I will exemplify this briefly with examples from four regions: biotic-abiotic relationships; genetics (both intergenetic relationship and gene/environment relationships); species evolution; human evolution and cultural development. This last will serve to tie together the two prime examples of this chapter.

Biotic-abiotic relationships

The story of the atmosphere is perhaps the clearest and most dramatic example of mutual self creation among living and "non-living" entities. Life evolved in a given geological and climatic context. Since that time, life has adapted to Earth's geology and climate while Earth has changed geologically and climatically in response to life. The biosphere has, indeed, as Odum says, "achieved control of the atmosphere."[17]

Even before life began, mutual self creation was at work. The Earth in which life began, some 3-plus billion years ago, was vastly changed from the Earth at her own beginnings. This story, though, cannot be told here.[18] As we pick up the story at life's presumed beginnings, though, we should pause to remember that the chemical soup in which life began was itself formed through the mutual interaction and transformation of many, many factors for nearly two billion years.[19]

> It is now generally believed that when life began on earth more than three billion years ago, the atmosphere contained nitrogen, ammonia, hydrogen, carbon monoxide, methane, and water vapor, but no free oxygen (see Berkner and Marshall, 1964, 1965; Drake (ed.) 1968; Tappen, 1968; and Calvin, 1969). It also contained chlorine, hydrogen sulfide, and other gases that would be poisonous to much of present-day life. . . . Because of the lack of oxygen there was no ozone layer (O_2 acted on by short-wave radiation produces O_3, which in turn absorbs ultraviolet radiation) to shield out the sun's deadly ultraviolet radiation, which, therefore, penetrated to the surface of the land and water. Such radiation would kill any exposed life, but, strange to say, it was this radiation that is thought to have created a chemical evolution leading to complex organic molecules such as amino acids, which became the building blocks for primitive life. . . .
>
> Because fermentation is so much less efficient than oxidative respiration, the primitive life could not evolve beyond the single-cell stage. Primitive organisms also had a very limited food supply since they would be dependent on the slow sinking of organic materials synthesized by radiation in the upper water layers where they, the hungry microbes, could not venture! . . .
>
> Presumably, the scarcity of organic food exerted selection pressure that led to the evolution of photosynthesis. (Note: in photosynthesis there is a small net gain of O_2 that is released into the environment. See Odum, p. 24-26, RC.) The gradual buildup of oxygen, biologically produced in water, and its diffusion into the atmosphere brought about tremendous changes in the earth's geochemistry and made possible the rapid expansion of life and the development of larger and more complex living systems. Many minerals such as iron were precipitated from the water and formed characteristic geological formations. As the oxygen in the atmosphere increased, the layer of ozone formed in the upper atmosphere thickened, the earth's surface became shielded, and life could then move up to the surface of the sea.[20]

Once there was some free oxygen (perhaps 3 percent of its current level) there was an explosion of multicelled animals, and life moved onto the land. Oxygen use did not reach equilibrium with oxygen production until sometime in the mid-Paleozoic era, perhaps 400 million years ago.[21]

The chemical composition of the earth has been dramatically changed, from the furthest extent of the atmosphere to some depth below the surface of the ground and below the bottom of the sea. Precipitation of minerals from sea water, caused by increased oxygen, led to characteristic geological formations, as we have seen above. Fluctuations of CO_2 and O_2, at least partly generated by the biosphere, affect the balance of energy received from the sun and reradiated into space, presumably causing warming and cooling of climates.[22] Not only how much energy is retained, but also what sort of energy is allowed to penetrate to the earth's surface, is affected by the atmosphere.[23]

The composition of the atmosphere is now regulated by two mechanisms, each of which tend to restore or maintain the atmosphere at current composition. One is gross photosynthesis.[24] The other is the oceans' great moderating influence:

> the oxygen content of the air and the nitrate in the sea are produced and largely controlled by organic activity . . . the oceans should be forever regarded as the great governor and protector of the biosphere . . .[25]

> The sea controls climate and slows down and controls the rate of decomposition and nutrient regeneration, thereby creating and maintaining the highly aerobic terrestrial environment to which the higher forms of life, such as man (sic), are adapted.[26]

Life and the geo-chemical Earth have developed in a more complex, responsive relationship. Neither could exist as it does without

the past and current existence of the other. Although a particular geochemical Earth was the precondition (or context) for life, that Earth no longer exists, nor would it exist should life suddenly cease. Also, that old Earth would be poisonous to nearly all modern life, while Earth today would instantly poison any of the original life forms.[27] The Earth and life have mutually created one another, and continue to do so still.

> Individual organisms not only adapt to the physical environment, but by their concerted action in ecosystems they also adapt the geochemical environment to their biological needs.[28]

Another good example of the inextricable interpenetration of "living" and "non-living" elements and processes is humus, a "universal component of ecosystems."[29] For a brief discussion of biotic and abiotic forces at work in the generation and decomposition of humus, see Odom, p. 28-29.

Genetics

Although we often think of genes acting in one-to-one relationships with "traits" such as eye color, the interactions among genes and their influences on one another are at least as great. When mutation takes place, these interactions are often of greater evolutionary significance than the simple mutation itself.[30] Thus at the level of genes, one gene affects many characteristics of the whole individual, one characteristic may result from the interplay of many genes, and each gene is in turn affected by many other genes, all of which in concert can grow an individual.

This interacting nexus of genes is, in turn, subject to "natural selection." If the individual it produces (or corresponds to) is not

reproductively fit, no element of the pattern continues. "Natural selection" is a term for another nexus of mutual self creation. Savage defines natural selection as the "sum total of environmental forces molding variation."[31] The environment is the interacting nexus of entities into which the individual may fit if she is to survive. The pattern of interaction among the genes, and between the genes and other factors in embryogenesis and development, must generate an individual who fits into another complex interactive network - an ecosystem.

Moreover, many members of the ecosystem are themselves individuals involved in genetic transmission. In an ecosystem there are many individual genetic fields, each of which relates to the others, by means of the individuals whose genetic fields they are.

> All living organisms live in an environment comprised of the physical and biotic influences of their particular ecosystem and are adapted in an extremely complex way to the matrix of interacting factors . . . [32]

> many genes and gene combinations are under the influence of hundreds of environmental factors.[33]

Single genes could not be what they are were other genes not what they are; individual species could not exist were not other species also existing; individuals mutually adapt to one another in living environments; genetic material is passed on by individuals who successfully fit with other individuals of many kinds into self-supporting living systems. Single genes could not be what they are were not individual species and individual members of the ecosystem what they are, which, in turn, receive their form from interaction with other species and individuals.

Species Evolution

We cannot imagine that single species evolve in an isolated process relevant to that species alone. Evolutionary processes are at work at every point, in every species, in every reproductive act. Selection is another word for the fact that only those changes that fit together into an ecosystem will survive in living individuals who can breed and pass them on.

> During the course of evolution, plant and animal groups interacted to each other's advantage. There is little doubt, for example, that the rise and spread of flowering plants fostered the diversification and dispersal of insects. As flowering plants became less and less dependent on wind for pollination, a great variety of insects emerges as specialists in transporting pollen. The colors and fragrances of flowers evolved as adaptations to attract insects. Flowering plants also exerted a major influence on the evolution of birds and mammals. Birds, which feed on seeds, fruits, and buds, evolved rapidly in intimate association with the flowering plants. The emergence of herbivorous mammals furnished the setting for the evolution of carnivorous mammals. The interdependence between plants and animals continues today.[34]

Human Evolution and Cultural Development

As we have already found, tools, artifacts and social patterns have been important factors in the evolution of the species homo sapiens. Animals in the human ancestry as ancient as 3.35 to 3.75 million years ago were already using crude tools fabricated from pebbles.[35] "Tool-making abilities appeared in human evolution before the tremendous enlargement of the brain and cranium typical of . . . Homo sapiens."[36] In fact, "tool use brought about selective pressures favoring increased brain size and complexity."[37] Once tools existed, those who used them better or who were more cunning at finding or fashioning them had a strong selective advantage. Tools were an important factor in primate evolution well before even one genius had appeared.

500,000 years ago, the genus Homo had become established, but not yet the species Sapiens. Nearly three million years of evolution under the impact of tools had already occurred. By then, fundamental social dispositions had also been in place for some time. It has been suggested that the family may have developed as early as Australopithecus - or 3 to 4 million years ago! Of Australopithecus, Pfeiffer says:

> His (sic) surprisingly advanced tools imply a variety of activities and purposes, and a brain already capable of some sort of language, and the possibility of social organizations far more elaborate than those of other primates.[38]

By 1-3/4 million years ago, some Australopithecine bands were living together in "home base" communities.[39]

> The whole evolutionary impact of disease and accident on the human species was changed when it became possible for an individual to stay in one place and not have to take part in the daily round of the troop. Certainly one of the reasons why it has been possible for man (sic) to migrate without building immunity to local diseases is that his way of life allows him to be far sicker than a baboon and still recover. Injuries to the legs are common and are far more serious, of course, for a biped than for a quadruped. It is the home base that changes sprained ankles and fevers from fatal diseases to minor ailments.[40]

While these developments were taking place, another great social development was taking place - the development of big game hunting. Pfeiffer asserts that, without the rise of big game hunting, "Homo erectus would not have developed."[41]

But extensive food pressures on vegetable and small game sources, the existence of tools and rudimentary social cooperation, and great abundance of larger game made this development extremely likely. By the time Homo erectus was fully evolved, humans had become effective group hunters with specialized sites at home for final butchering after the game had been field dressed and carried home.[42]

> The hunting/gathering economy of Homo erectus (NB ca 500,000 yrs ago) necessitated or permitted collaborative, or cooperative, interactions of individuals . . . Dismembering and sharing the animal prey or kill became a fundamental disposition of the group or band. The sharing of food regularly is a social achievement unique to man (sic); only rarely do apes share food. To this day, humans express sentiments of comradeship and trust by coming together in common meals.[43]

It is commonplace to note that humans have extraordinarily long childhoods compared to other animals. We less often notice that this biological, genetically controlled developmental pattern must have come into being in concert with social patterns which could support children, economically and emotionally.

In fact, developing intelligence and the increased brain size it required is directly related to the rise of culture as it is to the rise of individual awareness.

"The size of the brain in early man nearly doubled during the rise of hunting."[44] This fact has engendered a host of coadaptations, but they all center around one fundamental problem - birth and female anatomy. For reasons somewhat obvious but too complex to detail here, a female with a pelvis large enough to deliver a fully developed intelligent brain would have low survival value otherwise.[45] In Homo erectus as in Homo sapiens, "the brain had to do most of its growing after birth."[46] Homo erectus infants were helpless for perhaps 4-5 years after birth, compared to 5-6 years for Homo sapiens and only a few months for most mammals."[47] Thus a prolonged infancy with its concomitant requirements for support was created.

At the same time, there was a trend away from large births toward single, or at most double or triple, births. "The focus has been increasingly on the infant as an individual, in a way that can never be the came among species with large litters."[48]

Along with increased dependency and supportive care and heightened attention to the individual infant, came an extended period of time in which the growing individual could observe, listen, and learn.

> It is difficult to imagine the young of a rapidly maturing species learning to behave appropriately in a highly organized hunting band. (Someone) that could run, fight, and feed itself within six months or less after birth would probably not excel at the art of learning complex and flexible social responses. It would find itself too busy being a vigorous animal.[49]

Not only are infants helpless for long periods and in need of food and shelter, they also must be supervised, thus creating a group of adults who also must be provided for so that they can carry out the tasks of child-raising.

Infant helplessness contributed also to another profound evolutionary development - the disappearance of the estrus cycle, or "coming into heat." The sexual frenzy accompanying estrus is "so concentrated and intense during such periods that it tends to interrupt the care of the young and all other forms of behavior."[50] Such an interruption would prove fatal all too often. In response to this and other factors, humans became the only mammal in which estrus has entirely disappeared, probably between one million and a half million years ago in the Homo erectus hunting groups.[51] Among other things, this increased individual control over mating and choice of mates and opened the way to personal sexual relationships.

Of course, these consequences are not direct causal results of increasing intelligence and brain size. Moreover, many of these developments themselves favored further increases in intelligence, and in sociality. I have here only skimmed the surface of another enormously intricate nexus of mutual self creation.

What we can say without fear of contradiction is that culture and society are deeply imbedded in the evolutionary processes leading to Homo sapiens. Once tools had been invented, once cooperation had begun, they became themselves selective forces, and they are reflected in our genes.[52]

Summary

These sixteen pages have been the briefest overview of relations of mutual self creation that appear in basic ecological and evolutionary material. In fact, in general, the very concepts "ecology" and "evolution" refer to nexus of mutual self creation. However, there has been little philosophical or theological reflection of mutual self creation itself coming from the fields of Ecology and Evolutionary Theory.[53]

An Overview of the Chapter

In this chapter I have tried to clarify what "mutual self creation" means. We have found that there are some relationships in which no member can exist except in relation to the others. Human individuals cannot come into being without societies composed of human individuals. No element of the biosphere could be what it is except for its network of relationships. Moreover, human individuality cannot have developed apart from the development of sociality, nor can biological individuals and species have developed apart from the mutual interaction of their ancestors with one another. Finally, we have discovered that individuation and social development are themselves inseparably a part of the vast web of ecology.

There are two points about this formal relationship that are worth a moment's reflection:

1. It seems that "being-together" in mutual self creation is in some way related to "becoming-together." Being involved in one another's development, and being currently involved in an ongoing process of development, characterize at least those nexus of mutual self creation examined so far.

2. Relations of mutual self creation can and do exist among entities of the same logical type, and among entities of different logical types. The Theory of Logical Types was developed by Bertrand Russell in the Principia Mathematica. Gregory Bateson has made use of it in his ecological studies and theories, and I refer you to Bateson for more extensive discussion.[54] Briefly, the Theory of Logical Types distinguishes between a set and the members of that set. It further establishes the principle that the set cannot be a member of itself. For instance, "the set 'dogs'" is not itself a dog and cannot be considered a member of the set "dogs." This distinction has proved vital for unravelling some logical fallacies.

Nonetheless, while sets and their members cannot have this logical relationship of inclusion, they can have the existential relation of mutual self creation. For example, societies are classes whose members are individuals, while ecosystems are classes whose members are also individuals. In both cases, the class is not merely a collection of members according to an abstract principle of selection, such as the "set of red objects." Society is created by (one might say "is") the interactive process by which its members (people) create our concrete individuality.[54] An ecosystem, similarly, is the whole

made up of its interacting members, plants and animals, its geology and weather. "Society" and "Ecosystem" are names for the creative wholeness which characterizes the relation of mutual self creation among their members. As individuals, these members are engaged directly in relations of mutual self creation.

People form our individuality first through direct personal relations in infancy, and always our relations with one another are paramount in our development and in our transforming self-definition.[56] History and tradition are remembered and enacted by individuals, alone and together. Transmission of wisdom from generation to generation passes from person to person. Yet the pattern of these interactions, and even perhaps the development of this pattern, is not altogether a matter of individual choice, since individuals can only come into being in an ongoing social situation in which we are <u>given</u> a personal situation, a language, and a particular socially determined sense of what is real, of who we are supposed to be, of how others can be expected to treat us, and so on. Although "society" is the name for the nexus of mutual self creation which is the interaction of the individuals in the society, nonetheless society has an impact on those individuals. Society has a form of existence different from that of individuals, because of their different logical types. The entire nexus of mutual self creation (the society) has a wholeness as an entity in itself. A similar discussion could be laid out for ecosystems.

Entities that exist at different levels of comprehensiveness can engage in mutual self creation with one another. It may even be generally true that when entities are mutually self creative the set which they form is itself an entity; and that this entity is mutually self creative with its members.

At any rate we know the following: (a) There are relationships in which no member can exist without one another; (2) there are relations between sets and their members in which neither set could exist or come into being without one another; (3) human beings participate in mutual self creation in at least two profound areas of our existence: these are (a) our existence as self identifying individuals existing in social contexts and (b) our biological existence as members of our ecosystems and our participation in evolved and evolving communities of beings.

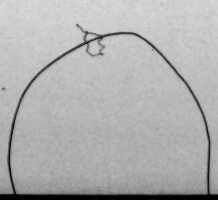
To bring the point home, let me express these insights in the first person, in terms of myself. Insofar as I am an individual who experiences personal identity, insofar as I belong to society, insofar as I am an animal living in ecological relationship with my environment, insofar as I am part of the process of evolution, I am a creature best characterized by mutual self creation. Speaking strictly for myself, that is pretty far. In the next chapter, we will discover that even perception is a nexus of mutual self creation.

CHAPTER II

PERCEPTION

In this chapter, I will explore the nature of our perceptual experience. At the outset, I am willing to be guided by a common-sense definition of perception: Perception is seeing and hearing and smelling and tasting and touching; the perceptual world is the world we sense "with our senses." However, as we investigate perception, we will discover that this sensory world is not separate from the "worlds" of feeling, thought, social interaction, personal history, language, and the rest. We will find that perception results from a complex process of mutual self creation, and that "the perceptual world" is itself a member of such a nexus. Toward the end of the chapter, the concept "perception" will find a place in the more comprehensive notion of "experience" as moniker for that whole to which "perception" belongs.

First I will discuss sensual perception "of the world" - what we usually mean by perception. Then I will consider "proprioception" - the physical sensation of my own body. By the end of this discussion we will be ready to discard the mythology that these two realms are separable and to know that the body and the world are interpenetrative. Finally I will sketch in the notion of "experience" which will be the main theme of Chapter IV.



The Perceptual World

If a person is fitted with a headpiece so that she can see only through a mirror which reflects at a 45° angle, at first her whole visual field seems slanted. A piece of cardboard falling from a desk appears to fall slantwise; a passerby seems to slant at an angle. But after a while her body adjusts: the room once more appears straight, objects fall parallel to the pull of gravity on her own body, passersby stand straight up and down.[1]

In another experiment, a trapezoidal room is constructed with a slanted floor, and the subject is situated so that, from his perspective, the room appears rectangular. In such a situation, a person standing on the high corner of the floor looks like a giant next to another person standing on the lower corner. If the subject is allowed to explore the room with a stick, he will not, at first, be able to reach with the stick to touch a point in his visual field. As he practices using the stick as a pointer and moving it about in the room, his perception will gradually shift until he sees the room in its actual shape and can reach accurately with a stick.[2] Gregory Bateson describes his experience with some of these experiments in Mind and Nature. "as I practiced," he said, "and improved my action, my image changed to give me a more trapezoidal impression of the room's shape."[3]

In these examples, a person's total perceptual field, and the person's ability to act in that field, undergo dramatic and radical transformation. This is so even though the direct sensory input is not changed. The retinal image of the room does not change, either for the woman looking through a mirror or for the man viewing a trapezoidal

room. Before and after the gestalt perceptual shift, from slanted to straight or from rectangular to trapezoidal, the light waves and their passageways to the eyes and the brain remain unchanged. The body adjusts its perception on some basis that goes beyond immediate sensory input.

Another common example of this fact is the stability of the visual field:

> our eyes are . . . constantly in motion, in large eye movements (saccades) as well as in eye tremors (nystagmus). We blink our eyes every second, move our eyes around, move our heads, our bodies, and we follow moving objects. The view of an object is never constant, and the very receptive fields on the eyes are changing all the time. Yet our visual world remains very stable.[4]

"The visual world is constructed on the basis of information taken in during many fixings."[5]

Visual perception is by no means a passive reception of light, or of information from light. The metaphor of a camera or a recording device is misleading, for nowhere in perceiving or in remembering is there any enduring copy of the optical input.[6] "In perceiving, complex patterns are extracted from (optical) input and fed in to the constructive processes of vision."[7]

Perception is not a passive process in any of its manifestations. Pribram and Spinelli, among others, have shown that the brain and the nervous system are active in perception. Neuro-chemically, "the output system of the brain (efference) has an effect on the input (afference), the brain 'selecting its input.'"

In On the Psychology of Meditation, Robert Ornstein concludes that much work in psychology and in physiology (some of which will be reviewed below) supports "the general view that ordinary awareness is a personal construction."[9] He goes on to note that "if awareness is a

construction and not a 'registration' of the external world, then by altering the nature of the construction process our awareness can be changed."[10] This fact, taken seriously, forms the basis for my investigations in Book II. For now it is enough to notice that perception may be much more mutable than we ordinarily believe.

Several facts stand out in this respect: (1) I never perceive all of anything at one time; (2) my senses are biologically limited; (3) even what my senses feel is filtered before I experience it as perception; (4) constant elements of the perceptual world disappear from perception ("Habituation"); (5) expectation, motivation, attention, emotional tone, reference group and a welter of other factors directly affect perception. Each of these, in a sense, describes what we might easily call "perspective." However, because of the visual connotations of perspective, I will refer to this phenomenon as "situation" or "being situated." In situation language, number (1) above expresses the ontology of being-situated, number (2) manifests the evolutionary situation of our species, number (3) refers to our concrete existence as situated individuals.

(1) I Never Perceive All of Anything at One Time

For instance, if I look at any material thing, say, a chair, there are always parts of the chair I cannot see. Or when I hear a sound, a tone, I cannot hear it all at once, but only over a stretch of time. Moreover, "seeing a chair" is hardly "perceiving all of it." For me to have all the perceptual experience I can have of the chair, in each of my senses and all their combinations, clearly cannot happen all at once. This is just another way of saying that I am situated, that is, I am "here" and the chair is "over there." Notice, however,

that "here" and "over there" can only arise together. "Here" only makes sense as the way in which I orient myself in my situation. I am "here" in relation to "over there," and should I proceed to sit in the chair, then spatially the chair will be "here" for me and my former place will be "over there."

Of course I never can perceive anything so simple as "a chair." The least I can perceive is "a chair against a background" as the Gestalt psychologists demonstrated.[11] In fact, there is always a third term, my perception of myself. I will perceive at least "me/here - chair/there - background."[12] This background also has unique characteristics. Consider a bare visual field with one chair and a neutral background. As that background disappears in my peripheral vision it nonetheless continues to have real existence for me. I know if I turn my head my visual field will continue, that my visual field is a seamless web that surrounds me at all times, even though I can not look at all of it at once. The "background" of the chair is simply part of the general ground of the situation "in" which the chair and I are present.[13]

"Being situated in relation to" characterises our existence as perceptual beings fundamentally, by virtue of our existence as unique biological entities. At every moment of my life I am situated, I "have my situation" to which I must respond as best I can. At the same time, I form part of the situation to which others must respond. We are situated with respect to one another. Thus though we are all in the same situation, we each have our own situation. This is true of entities at whatever dimension we choose. The chair and I are situated with respect to one another, but each have our own situation. You and I, in a social interaction, are related in the same way. Species in

ecological interrelation are each situated with respect to one another, and so on. In fact, thinking of entities that arise as being situations or "contexts" for one another is another way of thinking about mutual self creation.

So perception is limited because I exist as an opening onto the world, as a situation. Only if I were nowhere (or everywhere) could I see all sides of an object, only if I were no-when or every-when could I hear a whole tone "all at once." Actual sense perception cannot take place without at least three terms, the perceiver, the perceived and the situation in which they are perceptually related.

(2) My Senses Are Biologically Limited

In the last section I was dealing with perceptions that I did not have, but that I could, at least in principle, obtain. For instance, I can walk around a chair and examine it from all points of view, even though I can not see them all at the same time. This section raises the likelihood that there are ways of perceiving that would provide us much information, but which are in principle impossible for us even to concretely imagine, much less to attain. The best way to get at this, I believe, is to look at perceptual studies of animals.

The classic example is the famous study of frogs' eyes performed by Lettvin, Maturana, McCulloch and Pitts at MIT.[14] They were able to isolate and study the electrical impulses sent by the frog's optical nerve to its brain.

> In presenting a large number of different objects, colors, movements, to the frog, a remarkable phenomenon was observed: from all the different kinds of stimulation presented only four different kinds of "messages" were sent from the retina to the brain. In other words, no matter the complexity and subtle

> differences in the environment, the frog's eye is "wired up" to send only this extremely limited number of different messages. The frog's eye presumably evolved to discard the remainder of the information available.[15]
>
> Higher level animals exhibit similarities to this kind of process but on a much more complicated level.[16]

Only when we compare our visual world to that of the frog can we glimpse the enormity of what we, too, may be unable to sense. Nor can we be sure that any technological extension of our senses will inevitably reach these unknown realms. "The function of our receptors and sensory systems is not only to gather information but to select and discard it."[17]

This should not be mistaken for any Kantian or neoKantian position. As we saw in the last chapter, what I perceive in the world and the senses through which I perceive them have developed together in mutual and responsive interaction. As we will further see, they continue to do so in the act of perception, as well as in the evolution of perception. The human species is situated with respect to our evolutionary nexus. Our situation involves certain perceptual options, but may not involve others. That is all.

(3) I Perceive Less Than My Senses Feel

Not all of the data that reach the senses are active in perception; this is attested by the fact that I can always "draw my attention" to some part of the perceptual world I have not yet noticed.

In Principles of Perceptual Learning and Development, Eleanor Gibson argues that we learn to perceive distinctive features, invariant relationships, and patterns that we learn to extract from the total flux of stimuli. As well as the orienting responses of sense organs, she

identifies abstracting of relations and invariants, and discriminating relevant from irrelevant information as activities involved in extracting a stable perceptual world.[18]

> (She concludes) . . . perception is not passive reception. It is active search. From the welter of stimulation constantly impinging on the sensory surfaces of an organism, there must be selection.[19]

Robert Ornstein urges us to marvel for a moment at our "ordinary" consciousness. It is wonderful, he suggests, that we ever achieve a stable perceptual world, in the face of the fantastic amount and variety of stimulation, as:

> sounds, electricity, light waves, magnetism, smells, chemical and electrical impulses within ourselves, thoughts, internal muscular sensations, all constantly bombard us.[20]

In fact, an increase in sensory input reaching perceptual consciousness can lead to psychotic conditions for people unprepared to deal with a radically different-than-normal way of experiencing themselves and their environments.[21]

So we see that ordinary perception is no passive registration of a pre-given universe of objects. It is our active exploration of our situation in which we select from our sensorium a stable perceptual world.

Eleanor Gibson has briefly noted some factors involved in perceptual stability in the quotation cited above. She includes "distinctive features, invariant relationships, and patterns" as well as the activities of "abstracting relations and invariants and discriminating according to relevance." These factors are all profoundly social and cultural: surely the distinctive features of our environments are largely composed of human artifacts, especially during infancy; the

"invariant relationships and patterns" of both our physical and our interpersonal environment are influenced by culture, interpersonal relationships being influenced by role expectations while physical environment is largely made of artifacts - buildings, clothing, cribs, toys - whose materials, textures, colors, shapes, and patterns differ extensively across cultures. Finally, what is "relevant" to learn to perceive in urban New York must be quite different from what it takes to get along among the few remaining nomadic Eskimo bands. Even pulling these various factors apart as I have in this paragraph is a kind of falsification. For instance, invariant spatial relationships during infancy tend to be partly architectural and to reflect and embody role relationships into which the child is born.[22] What we are uncovering here is a nexus of mutual self creation which is involved in the process of perception. I will return to this point in greater detail below. It is worth remembering, though, that even individual perception is a social activity.

(4) Habituation - Constant Elements of my Perceptual Field Tend To Disappear

One way to simplify our perception is by lowering awareness of the constancies in our field. This true of both "external" perception and of "proprioception."

In terms of our own body sense, the clearest example of habituation is learning a motor skill, like riding a bicycle, or skiing, or dancing.

> While we are learning a new skill, like skiing, all the complex adjustments and motor movements are somewhat painfully in our awareness. As we progress, as skill becomes "automatic," the movements no longer enter consciousness.

This may seem a bit trivial applied to skiing, but remember that sitting up, rolling over and walking are habituated skills, learned in infancy.[24]

Constancies in the environment, too, tend to disappear from awareness. A simple test of skin resistance has been developed which can be used to test perception of sound. A click, for instance, will correlate with a sudden drop in skin resistance. If the click is repeated at regular intervals not too far apart, the skin resistance response quickly weakens to zero, as does perception of the clicks. If the volume or the tempo is slightly altered, perception and skin resistance reappears.[25] You have the same sort of experience if you enter a room with a ticking clock which at first you notice and then later do not hear. Even later you will probably notice the ticking again.

Karl Pribram reported on what he called the "Bowery El" effect. A noisy elevated train which had run regularly for years late at night through a New York City neighborhood was stopped and its tracks torn down. At once, people in the neighborhood began to report all manner of odd late night occurrences, such as thieves, noises, and the like. Investigation revealed that the people were missing their train noise and the absence made them uncomfortable.[26]

Even our eye movements become stereotyped when we look at "familiar" objects.[27] We habitually become perceptually unaware of stabilities in our proprioception and in external perception, and we develop stereotyped perceptual habits with respect to the "ordinary." Again I would point out how much of what remains constant in our interpersonal and physical environment is socio-cultural and how many of the skills we learn and habituate are culturally determined or influenced.

(Imagine, e.g., the difference in feeling between habituating "sitting in an office typing, phoning and reading" and "moving through the country hunting and gathering food.")

(5) Many Factors Directly Affect Perception

We tune our perception on the basis of numerous factors many of which are fundamentally personal. By "personal" I mean to include both the individuality and the sociality inherently intertwined throughout any human perception. It is awkward to say "both individual and social" and it is also misleading, because it helps us pretend there are <u>two</u> separate "things" - an individual and a society - which then "get mixed together." In fact, as we have seen, to be an individual is to be in society while society is the whole whose members are social interactions. For the time being, therefore, to avoid these problems, I intend to use "personal" to describe this nexus of individuality and society.

So, again, we tune our perception on the basis of numerous factors many of which are fundamentally personal. For instance,

> . . . we become more sensitive to portions of our environment when we are in need. When we are hungry we see more restaurants, see more food, smell more aromas than when we are not. When we are awaiting someone we immediately notice anyone who resembles the other person, in his hair color, general appearance, clothes, or because he is coming out of the door through which we expect the person to arrive. When we are interested in the opposite sex we perceive them differently than when we are not . . . We are able to continuously reprogram and reconstruct our awareness, based, at least in part, on our intent.[28]

You can do an easy experiment in selective tuning the next time you are at a cocktail party, or anywhere there are a number of conversations within earshot. Just pick out one conversation to overhear in

the babble, then let that one slip out of focus and pick up another to listen to, and then another, and then another.

One important factor affecting perception is prior experience. It is easier to recognize familiar objects and words than unfamiliar ones,[29] and here again we see cultural and social patterns having their effect.

Jerome Bruner suggests that perception is:

> Not so much a matter of representation as it is a matter of what I shall call model-building. In learning to perceive we are learning the relations that exist between the properties of objects and events that we encounter and learning appropriate categories and category systems. Learning to predict and project what goes with what.[30]

In one experiment, Bruner and his colleagues showed people playing cards one at a time. A few of the cards were mis-colored, with a red ace of spades, or a black six of diamonds. The subjects saw the cards as normally colored. It was not until they were told that some of the colors might be different that they noticed.[31]

> We develop stereotyped systems or categories for sorting the input that reaches us. The set of categories we develop is limited, much more limited than the richness of the input. Simple categories may be "straight," "red," or "animal." More complex ones may be "English," "rectilinear," or "in front of." In social situations categories may be personality traits. . . . Personality traits seem to exist mainly in the category system of the perceiver.[32]

As Bruner's experiment with cards and colors shows, we are inclined to perceive our categories even when they are counterfactual to our sensory information.

Hasdorf and Cantril used these concepts to study a complex event - a football game. Their research is too complex to review here, but their conclusions were as follows:

> . . . it is inaccurate and misleading to say that different people have different "attitudes" concerning the same "thing." For the "thing" simply is not the same for different people, whether the "thing" is a football game, a presidential candidate, Communism, or spinach. We do not simply "react to" a happening or to some impingement from the environment in a determined way (except in behavior that has become reflexive or habitual). We behave according to what we bring to the occasion, and what each of us brings to the occasion is more or less unique.[33]

> The "same" sensory impingements emanating from the football field, transmitted through the visual mechanism to the brain also obviously gave rise to different experiences in different people.[34]

Gibson reviews the extensive research on task assignment and perception and concludes:

> It seems clear that the task assigned interacts with stimulus information to effect strategies of perceiving as well as what is perceived.[35]

Again, what "tasks" exist and whether or not an individual can assign them to herself, or be assigned them, are largely social and cultural questions.

Many of the factors discussed in this chapter revolve around the dimension of significance, which I will discuss at some length in the next chapter. As Cantril and Hastorf note:

> an "occurrence" on the football field or in any other social situation does not become an experiential "event" unless and until some significance is given to it.[36]

Really this dictum holds for "private" experience as well. No experience at all can be resolved, or even be oriented to myself, unless it has some significance for me. In fact "being oriented to me," "having significance (meaning) for me," and "being part of my situation" are closely related terms.

Significance, identity, motivation, task delineation, expectation and language are all learned in social and intersubjective

milieux. The environmental regularities and bodily skills that we habituate, the categories we learn to screen our sensations, the frames we create to define "events," all of these are built up partly on the basis of social and cultural factors. For example, Segal, et al., found cross cultural differences in learned visual inference habits - the way we "fill in" incomplete visual information.[37] Dawson has performed similar studies in West Africa.[38] LeVine has shown that cultural influences can radically affect the distribution of personality types in the population,[39] while Hunt, in the introduction to his Personality and Culture, states:

> By now it is axiomatic that most pyschic variables, and especially much of the personality, are largely determined by cultural conditioning.[40]

E. T. Hall, the anthropologist, has shown that culture even affects direct experience of time and space.[41] One clear example is the Japanese perception of ma - what we call the space between objects.

> When Westerners think and talk about space, they mean the distance between objects. In the West, we are taught to perceive and to react to the arrangements of objects and to think of space as "empty." The meaning of this becomes clear only when it is contrasted with the Japanese, who are trained to give meaning to spaces - - to perceive the shape and arrangement of spaces; for this they have a word, ma. The ma, or interval, is a basic building block in all Japanese spatial experience.[42]

Perhaps the most fantastic results Hall reports are on the phenomenon he calls "synching."[43] As Hall reports, Condon, Birdwhistell and Hall have found that whenever humans interact, our body movements, both gross (like arm swinging or finger twiddling) and subtle (like eye-blinking) tend to fall into close rhythmic interaction: "man (sic) probably syncs everything he does and when he is out of phase this is a sign that something is very, very wrong."[44] "Basically, people in

interactions move together in a kind of dance, but they are not aware of their synchronous movement and they do it without music or conscious orchestration."[45] In fact, even the EEG records of interacting people are in synch.[46] However, this is completely true only of very young infants or of people from the same culture.

> Synching is panhuman. It appears to be innate, being well established by the second day of life, and may be present as early as the first hour after birth. What is more, stop motion and slow motion studies of motion of newborn children made by Condon and his associates revealed that the newborn infants initially synchronized the movement of their bodies to speech regardless of the language. American children, for example, synced with Chinese just as well as they did with English. From this, it appears that synchrony is perhaps the most basic element of speech and the foundation on which all subsequent speech behavior rests.[47]

This remarkable flexibility eventually fades:

> . . . while infants will synch with the human voice regardless of language, they later become habituated to the rhythms of their own language and culture.[48]

People from different cultures, Hall says, "inhabit different sensory worlds."[49]

Nor have we yet covered all the factors effecting perception. For instance, perceptions do not correspond in any one-to-one way with stimuli, even when actually experienced perceptions are considered: relations among stimuli may alter perceptions, to the point of changing color perception of a wavelength of light. Wavelengths that under some circumstances look yellow under others look brown.[50] In perception of motion, we perceive not merely the object, but also a projected path of motion which is actually perceived.[51] This begins in infants as early as the eighth week.[52]

Moreover, the total perceptual field can undergo developmental, modal shifts. Tart's work on states of consciousness indicates the

nature of some of these shifts. Tart points in a commonsense way to dreaming, meditative states, drug states, ordinary consciousness and lucid dreaming as examples of states of consciousness. Perception can be quite different in these different states.[53]

Studies indicate that the perceptual world grows through developmental modal shifts. Consider, for example, the child's developing experience of spatial relationships, e.g., the relationship "inside." Even from before birth the child is, from our point of view, "inside" things: the womb, a crib, a blanket, and so on. At first, though, the child takes no notice of "insideness." None of her actions makes reference to it, though her milk is inside the bottle, her favorite food is in a jar, and the pens are in the kitchen cupboards. Suddenly this changes. The child begins to take tops off of things, to look inside cupboards, to put her hand in to explore places she cannot see. She has added the relationship "inside" to her perceptual world.

This sort of development is characterized by what I call "enlightenment" transformations. For instance, children up to the end of their first year do not act as if they perceive stable objects, which continue to exist even when removed from view.[54] Children seem not to experience space originally as three-dimensional. They relate to visual objects as if they were flat, not turning them over to look at their backsides or seeming to be aware that they have hidden perspectives. Then rather suddenly, in time with the development of their own ability to move through space and crawl "around" objects, they seem to experience and "live-in" fully three dimensional space for the first time.

Consider this transformation in your own life. When the world became spatially three dimensional, when objects were perceived as

having hidden perspectives "behind" (and "inside") them, when I myself experienced my ability to move through space and my existence for others as a three dimensional body, and the existence of an "inside" to myself, my self and my world were irrevocably changed forever as I directly perceive and experience them. I am still me, the world is still itself. In this developmental growth there is a mutual depeening of the self/world, in which at once it is altogether changed while remaining the same.[55] This radical transformation of experience, reaching deep into the self and the world, is a paradigm for "enlightenment experiences" of all kinds. (I will develop this idea in Book II, Chapter III.)

Piaget comments:

> In development, the passage from one stage to the next is always characterized by the formation of new structures which did not exist before, either in the external world or in the subject's mind.[56]

Conclusions

> Our senses receive information from the external world but for the most part, are built to discard much of the continuously changing stimulation that reaches them. We also possess the ability to restrict further and modify the information that reaches awareness, by "reprogramming." The brain selects and modifies input. We build "models" or representations of the world based on our past experience. We can, therefore, tune our awareness on the basis of past experience, expectation, and needs. We use this ability to tune out the constancies of the world. . . . Our experience is therefore an interactive process. . . . We can select input, tune ourselves to relevant input, categorize and finally construct our awareness from these and from our past experiences, our associations, thoughts, and emotional state.[57]

> . . . Perception is a functional affair based on action, experience, and probability. The thing perceived is an inseparable part of the function of perceiving, which in turn includes all aspects of the total process of living. This view differs from the old rival theories: the thing perceived is neither just a figment of the mind or an innately determined absolute revelation of a reality postulated to exist apart from the perceiving organism. Object and percept (NB: and perceiver and perception I might add) are part and parcel of the same thing.[58]

In other words, perception is part of a process of mutual self creation. We have seen that social and cultural factors figure highly in this process. Major elements of the physical world and of our models and categories are cultural and/or social. Role related identifications and activities are obviously socio-cultural and personal attitudes, nourishment patterns, activity habits and even body postures and movement qualities are culturally influenced and bear directly on perception. Even the experience of time and space can be affected deeply by collective factors.

Let us now turn to our physical feelings of our own selves - proprioception. We will discover that the "body" is no more separate from the world than the "thing perceived" is from the "perceiver." The body names another element in this interpenetrating relation of mutual self creation and not any thing that exists or could exist "itself."

Proprioception

We are accustomed to dividing the world in two characteristic ways, with respect to the body. We tend to experience a dichotomy between "my body" which is bounded by my skin and "the rest of the world"; and "within" my body I tend to experience a dichotomy between what I can be aware of and what I cannot be aware of - the so called "autonomic" system. Experiments are now indicating that our purely physical being, our muscles and organs and nerves and brains, are more sensitive to and connected with the rest of the cosmos than we have imagined. At the same time, recent studies show that we can be aware of and in control of our bodies to a far greater degree than we currently are or previously believed possible. It may be that these characteristic experiential dichotomies are neither inevitable nor accurate.

In 1974, Dr. Barbara Brown wrote a book which reviews the research to that date on biofeedback research. The resulting 421 pages of New Mind, New Body is a startling compendium of data about what we can learn to feel and control in our bodies.[59] There is practically nothing going on within our bodies that we cannot consciously become aware of and learn to affect. At the same time, every sensation, experience, emotion, thought, or wish has its impact on the physical body.

Biofeedback has been used to train people to do some fantastic things. For instance, Basmajian, testing individuals' ability to control single muscle nerve cells, found:

> Normal human beings can quickly, in a matter of fifteen or twenty minutes, isolate only one motor unit from the population of perhaps a hundred or two hundred which are within an area of pick up of an electrode pair. They can suppress all of the units, fire single units, manipulate those units, turn them on and off easily, suppress the one they started with, pick up another one, train it, suppress it, turn to a third and then, on command, they can respond with signals from the unit that you chose for them to respond with.[60]

The autonomic muscle system, too, can be consciously controlled. People, for instance, learn to speed up our heart beat,[61] and to raise or lower our blood pressure.[62]

Research with animals is, if anything, even more startling. Working with monkeys, researchers have discovered that one cell in the cortex was responsible for operating a particular coordinated movement. A monkey was trained to recognize and control that single cell. Then the monkey was trained to trigger only some of the muscle cells controlled by the sole cerebral cell. Finally the monkey was trained to trigger the brain cell with no muscular response whatsoever.[63]

DiCara and Miller worked with animals drugged with curare (a paralytic) to lessen the chance that subjects created effects with

their skeletal muscles. Animals could easily learn to alter blood flow, blood pressure, kidney function and electrical brain activity and they could raise them or lower them each.[64]

> In one experiment sensors were implanted in both ears of a rat and reward was given only when there was a difference in the blood flow of one ear as compared with the other. The rat could not, in this instance, produce the desired results by altering a general process, such as an increase in blood flow or an alteration in heart rate. The rat learned to control its blood flow to each ear differentially, raising it on one and then in the other.[65]
>
> It would seem that once the information is available to consciousness and the signals can be perceived, many involuntary processes are quite modifiable.[66]

Lest anyone think that these are innately unconscious or involuntary signals that can only be brought to consciousness by machines, let me cite the case of Swami Rama. Among other things this yogi was able to stop his heartbeat for ten to thirty seconds and to alter the temperature on one palm so that there was a 10^{o} difference across less than two inches of skin.[67] Swami Rama was not trained at the Menninger Institute and he did not learn how to control his "autonomic" muscles and nerves by mechanically induced feedback. He was trained by culture, tradition, teaching and practice.

There are also the famous "alpha wave" experiments to consider. Alpha-waves are one of the characteristic sets of brain wave frequencies appearing on EEGs. It has been shown that characteristic alpha wave patterns correspond to characteristic personality traits, at each instant and over time.[68] Alpha wave activity increases during Zen meditation and does so more in more advanced meditators.[69] Moreover, studies done at the Psychological Institute of Kiyushu University have shown that it is not body posture or environmental setting, but "mental attitude" that generates alpha in meditation.[70]

It has also been shown that people can easily learn to control alpha with the aid of biofeedback machines[71] and that once they have learned how to do it, they no longer need the machine.[72]

As the case of meditation shows, alpha awareness does not depend on modern technology. Somewhere in our usually unregistered proprioception, there must be some "feeling" which we can learn to identify and to control that correlates with alpha waves on an EEG.

We should not be surprised by these facts. We have known for a long time that personality traits, emotions and various kinds of stress are related to organic syndromes and diseases.[73] Common knowledge has it that emotion and stress are related to ulcers, high blood pressure and heart disease. Less well known, perhaps, is that "there is mounting evidence that even cancer is linked to emotional stress."[74] Also little known is research into emotion and the heart. Dr. Brown concludes that emotion, along with muscle activity and disease, are the three major influences on heart rate.[75] Brown also shows that emotion is a factor in the death rate as well.[76]

As Robert Ornstein has pointed out, the very foundation of modern psychiatry and psychology bespeak the power of the "mind" to affect the "body":

> The original studies of Freud and Breuer on hysteria point in the same direction. Their first, quite well-known case cites a woman whose hand was paralyzed. Her paralysis took the shape of a glove, which Freud considered "anatomical nonsense" since the muscles that would have been affected by a "real" paralysis did not stop at the line marked by the glove. Freud's insight was that this paralysis was voluntary, although in his terms "unconscious, control of the woman . . .
>
> There is an important theoretical point for our consideration here. The fact that one can voluntarily bring about a hysterical paralysis in the shape of a glove makes it clear that one can achieve precise

> control of the blood flow and musculature in quite specific areas of the hand. The yogi's claim to controllability of blood flow and related matters seems much less fantastic.[77]

It seems that our divisions of mind and body, and of "skeletal" and "autonomic," are largely arbitrary. What we can and can't experience seems to depend largely on belief and training and many of the same factors that affect "external" perception also affect proprioception. Nor is proprioception more "individual" and less "social" than "external" perception.

Practically everything about the way we learn to use our bodies is influenced by culture. The degree of muscle tension and where it is located in the body, how to walk, proper carriage and posture, the kinetic expression of feelings, sexual behavior - all of these are permeated with social learning.[78]

As we have seen above in the discussion of synching, fundamental rhythms manifesting themselves even in brain wave patterns are learned in infancy. These rhythms and their rhythmic interactions permeate physical activity, social activity and every aspect of personal life.[79]

The connections between synching, language and perception raise the issue of the role of language in perception. I will consider this question in the next chapter. For now, two points are worth raising:

1. "Language seems to be important in overall perception. We seem to perceive objects more clearly when we have a name for them." We can expect that this pertains to the relations implicit in the structure of language as well as the names explicit in its vocabulary.

2. Both the form and the vocabulary of language (of symbolizing in the broadest sense) participate in the very coming into being of

perception. For instance, the information provided by biofeedback machines is a symbol, which people use to bring into focus perceptions hitherto unnoticed. The information provided by the machine is "complex, ideational, abstract, symbolic, associational information"[81] which must be explained, or interpreted, to the person before it can become meaningful. We can imagine that a child brings the world into focus through symbols and interpretation in much the way that an adult brings alpha waves into focus.

We have found thus far that proprioception is an active, dynamic construct involving many individual, social and environmental factors. We have also found that people can learn to sense and control very subtle proprioceptive signals. There is increasing evidence to show that just as we can learn to experience very subtle proprioceptive signals, so we may be affected by, and able to experience, very subtle environmental forces - such as electromagnetic fields, fluctuations in the earth's geomagnetic field, and radiation from space caused by solar flares,[82] ionization of the air,[83] and light.[84] The well known phenomenon of "biological clocks" shows that animals, plants and people are affected by the rotation of the earth, the passing of the seasons, the angle of the sun's rays on earth - in short, the movement of the earth and the celestial bodies.[85]

It is becoming increasingly clear that the universe is interconnected.

The Body/World Nexus

In the last two sections, we have seen that both external perception and body feeling are dynamic constructions in which many

of the same factors are active. In fact, what we call "my body" and what we call "the external world" are themselves intimately connected members of a nexus of mutual self creation.

Dr. Green, of the Menninger Foundation, has proposed what he calls the "psychophysiological principle":

> Every change in the physiological state is accompanied by an appropriate change in the mental-emotional state, conscious or unconscious . . . and conversely, every change in the mental-emotional state, conscious or unconscious, is accompanied by an appropriate change in the physiological state.[86]

Maurice Merleau-Ponty has shown in his Phenomenology of Perception that every perception of something other than my body is rooted in and correlated to an element of my proprioceptive experience. In sight, for instance, what I directly feel are my own physical processes, stimulated by light which activates nerves when it strikes them. The spectacle that I see is rooted in and correlates to these feelings in my body. "Every external perception is immediately synonymous with a certain perception of my body,"[87] and it is quite literal to say that each of us feels the whole world in our bodies.

> External perception and the perception of one's own body vary in conjunction because they are the two facets of one and the same act.[88]

The body which I experience as mine and the world I experience my body existing within are profoundly mutually self creative and cannot be torn asunder into separately existing entities.

At the outset of this chapter I suggested a common-sense definition of perception as seeing, hearing, tasting, touching and smelling. In the course of our investigation, we have uncovered a much more comprehensive domain, in which the conscious experience of

sensory information plays a role. I propose that the word perception continue to refer to this smaller domain of "consciously experienced sensory information" and that the word experience be used to name the larger nexus in which perception is involved. My reasons are simple. I think that perception is a fundamental element in experience. If I used perception for the larger whole, I would have to invent another word for perception, which seems foolish. Chapter III is devoted to exploring the concept experience.

Summary

External perception and proprioception are complex processes of mutual self creation among many members. Culture, society, language, personal history, organic fact, and the ecological environment are all active participants in the process of perception. Personal awareness and the experience of one's own body cannot be radically separated, nor can "mind" be denied access to any aspect of "body." Likewise, the "body" and the "world" can no longer be understood as two distinct entities in some way over against one another. They are absolutely interpenetrative and mutually responsive. All these factors - culture, society, language, personal history, organic fact, ecological environment, body experience and world experience - participate together in the vast nexus of mutual self creation that is experience.

CHAPTER III

SIGNIFICANCE, MEANING AND LANGUAGE

In the first chapter, I demonstrated that widely accepted contemporary frameworks of thought disclose dynamic networks of mutual self creation. In the second chapter, I presented empirical data to support the belief that perception is both the manifestation of and a member in a network of mutual self creation. In this chapter, I want to begin to deal with this central fact that emerges from the first two chapters: we ourselves are beings who exist, fundamentally, as members of a single, whole nexus of mutual self creation. This nexus I will call <u>experience</u>.

Here for the first time we will encounter the bedevilling problems of language face to face. "Experience" refers to the whole nexus of mutual self creation referred to above. As such, it can only be explicated through symbols that are themselves members of this nexus. Since a part cannot adequately encompass the whole, experience can never be adequately symbolized. Moreover, we have seen in the last chapter that the self and the world cannot be sundered at any level: there is no "I" set over against the world and other people, there is no "mind" somehow apart from and needing to be connected with a "body," there is no "thing in itself" that perception somehow "fails to reach." We have discovered that these entities are not independent existents "brought into" relationship. They come into being and exist only in

relation to one another; they mutually participate in one another's ongoing self formative processes.

Language, particularly written language, is ill equipped to express these mutual connections. This is even more true of the language that has developed during the Western Cultural Revolution of the last three hundred years. But this is the language we speak, and we are now well into a written communication process. So we will have to struggle together with our language in the next few chapters.

Later in this chapter, I will reflect on why and how language falls apart at this critical juncture. For now, it is most important for us to remember Korzybski's famous phrase: "The map is not the territory." To repeat that in other words: What I am saying is not what I am talking about. No element or aspect of experience, much less the whole of experience, can be fully "caught" in a symbol. Try to describe the last taste sensation you had. You can describe what it was "like," but never how it actually was.

Before embarking on the discussion of meaning, I would like to very briefly sketch the sense of "experience." Fundamentally, I am using the term in a very commonsense way. I might say, "I went to the circus and it was quite an experience!" Or when someone questions me about something I have told her I might reply, "I experienced it myself. It is so." To experience something is to be present to it, "to have an experience" is to be present in a context.

What is noteworthy about experience is that there is, literally, nothing else. There is nowhere "outside" of experience to examine or evaluate experience. Feeling, knowing, believing, sensing, dreaming and imagining all are experience. Self and world are experience, and

experience of self or world is experience of both, rising together in a relation.

The fact that there is nothing outside experience does not mean that experience is fixed and there is never anything new. Quite the contrary. Experience is constantly transforming. It is a matter of common experience that experience changes from moment to moment, and that sometimes experience can change profoundly. But this change does not come from outside experience - it is characteristic of experience. A new object, or a new point of view, does not come from nowhere into experience. It comes from the open potential for change given in experience. It is foreshadowed in the experience that the unanticipated may happen. This openness in experience will prove to be extremely important.

Before continuing on to discuss the dimension of significance, I should perhaps pause a moment longer to discuss scientific and theological insight in relation to experience. It sometimes seems, and some people believe, that the physical universe (for scientists) or God (for theologians) lies outside or beneath experience. That is a misleading way to symbolize the situation.

Science and theology claim to make statements that are significant in ordinary experience; experience is the final arbiter of any truths that they espouse. Even insight itself must be experienced and belongs to experience.

If a theologian says "God transcends experience utterly," we must understand it to mean "In the experience of God, there is experience of a being who utterly transcends experience." Although paradoxical, this statement is far from meaningless.

If taken literally, the statement "God utterly transcends experience" would express a paradox of a different kind. It would mean "There is no experience of God including that there is no experience of God." The difference between the two paradoxes is evident. The first statement proposes that there can be experience with a paradoxical, though highly significant, form. This question cannot be decided logically, but only experientially. The second statement, however, presents not an experiential, but merely a symbolic, conundrum, at the level of "All statements are false including this one."

About science, Maurice Merleau-Ponty has said:

> . . . my scientific knowledge . . . (is gained from) . . . some experience of the world without which the symbols of science would be meaningless. The whole universe of science is built upon the world as directly experienced, . . . the basic experience of the world of which science is the second-order expression. Science has not and never will have the same significance . . . as the world which we perceive, for the simple reason that it is a rationale or explanation of that world.[1]

Science is "about" the ordinary world, though I should note that, since symbolization is part of the nexus of mutual self creation that generates perception, "science" is not merely a description of perception, but also an active factor in shaping that perception, to the extent that a culture or an individual accepts scientific symbolizations of reality. The same applies, of course, to religious symbolizations, or to any other. The "physical nature" of Science and the "God" of theologians are not outside of experience. They are accessible to experience, though not, perhaps, to ordinary experience. Insight into them comes from that openness of experience noted above: experience is not a fixed content, but a dynamic of mutual self creation.

Having once again come directly upon the problem of language, meaning and significance, I will leave this preliminary sketch of experience, and plunge into the question at hand.

Significance, Meaning and Language

Language emerges from the dimension of significance in much the same way that life emerges from the dimension of geochemistry. Language developed on the basis of an already existing dimension of significance, but once language was on the scene, it altered that dimension radically and irrevocably, as life changed Earth's geochemistry. Though emerging from significance and meaning, language, even as it emerges, is fully mutual in relationship to meaning and significance as well.

Significance

Significance is rooted in the very nature of mutual self creation. We touched on this point earlier in the discussion of "situation" as inherent in mutual self creation. In any given nexus of mutual self creation, each of the members of the nexus is in a different situation than the others. Each member of the nexus has a relation with every other member and combination of members and each relation is unique, depending on the situations of its members. In the example easiest to grasp, the members of a human group each have unique relationships with each other. This fact is not limited to people, though, but pertains quite generally. For instance in a Helium atom, made up of an electron, a neutron and a proton, both the neutron and the electron have very important relationships with the proton. But what it is about the proton that is relevant is different

for the electron than for the neutron. The electrical charge that is crucial for the electron is irrelvant for the neutron. In this example, the proton has a different significance for the electron than for the neutron.

The significance, then, that entities have for one another, is inherent in their mutual self creation. The manner in which any entity or group of entities (A) is involved in the self creation of any other entity or group (B) is A's significance for B. Clearly, in mutual self creation, entities are mutually significant. B will also be involved in A's self formation and will have its own significance for A.

Significance and Meaning

Every situated entity exists in a context of significance. In a nexus of mutual self creation every entity is significant for the others. "Meaning" is the term I will give to an entity's "sense of significance." Any entity is more or less in touch with its context of significance. For example, in the study of frog's perception discussed in Chapter II, frogs were found to have very limited visual perception, quite adequate for registering the significance of flies and other food, but utterly incapable of visually formulating the bulldozer that comes to destroy the pond. In the example of the electron and the proton in the section above, an electrically bonded electro-proton pair are fully aware of each other's electrical significance. Meaning is "what matters" to an entity in its own field of feeling. From this point of view, both significance and meaning permeate existence even at the "physical" level, as well as at the biological and psychological levels. Every entity "feels" in some

way a context of significances oriented toward its own being. An electron is oriented in an electrical field, or it has the potential to become so; it is either "feeling electrical charge" or "ready to feel electrical charge." Forces operate between entities because the entities "feel one another" by means of those "forces." Gravitational attraction is the feeling that "matter" has for itself over distance, while the "weak forces" that bind nuclei together are the manner in which nucleotides feel themselves when close together.[2]

In any case, meaning is inherent in perception from its evolutionary inception. Perception is not disinterested inspection of data by a disinterested "consciousness." Perception is the orienting act of a living being; it is not disinterested, but precisely interested!

Perception is linked to activity, to strategies for being in the world. Even viruses perceive what they need to in order to recognize when to stop being dormant and protected and to begin activity in host cells. An amoeba extending a pseudopod toward nourishment is responding to meaningful perception, as is a plant whose leaves follow the sun. Perception itself is meaningful, and its meanings are not "propositions about reality" but messages about the entity's situation and possibilities of action. Perception is, as we have seen, interactive and selective, and it depends on all of the elements involved. Every entity has a kind of "intelligence," an ability to recognize and respond to significant situations.

Piaget has shown that for human beings, beginning in infancy before language appears, there is, "a sensory motor intelligence that is a practical intelligence having its own logic - a logic of action."[3] Piaget believed that our ability to use symbols is rooted in this

sensory-motor intelligence and emerges from it in individual development.[4] What Piaget calls sensory-motor intelligence is a highly evolved form of what I have been calling "response to a meaningful situation." I agree that symbolization arises in response to the experience of meaning, and that meaning arises in relation to the capacities of the entity to interact.

Certainly one facet of symbolization appears as soon as entities are capable of learning - and that is as early on the "evolutionary scale" as earthworms, at least. Learning requires an entity to recognize that the current situation and some previous situation are in some significant respect "the same" or "similar." This means that the entity (the earthworm, say) is able to experience, at least in a limited way, a general reference within present experience. Please notice that I am not attributing "consciousness" to earthworms. In fact I have ventured no hypothesis about "how" earthworms learn. I am simply trying to describe what "learning" itself means. However they do it, earthworms are able to apply lessons learned in previous situations to current situations, and to do so they must recognize the relevance of the former situations to the latter one.

General Reference

Momentary sensuous input is in constant flux. Experienced time is always flowing, so that "just now experience" flows from "just then experience" in an unbroken whole. The very openness of experience ensures that experience is constantly changing: color appears in a flowing series of color perspectives, spatial objects offer varying positions around them, sounds appear as changing continuity through time (for appearing to and passing out of hearing are part of sound).

Moreover, as the entity responds to its context, its situation changes with respect to that context. As an amoeba extends its pseudopod toward food, its perspective on that food is constantly changing. It is not possible to have the "same" perception, even for the tiniest instant; perception is always "just this one now."

Any entity capable of a sustained response (of any response more than utterly momentary) experiences some continuity in the midst of this flux. A situation, such as "reaching pseudopod for food" remains constant though the momentary perceptions of it differ. This constancy is oriented to the relevance structure of the entity, to what is meaningful to it in its situation. Such constancy reflects the role of the "perceiver" in "perception" at the earliest evolutionary levels; perception is always an active construct in which entities in situation achieve stable fields of meaning and activity.

An entity such as we have been discussing would be able to recognize and respond to a situation, but it would not be capable of learning, for it would not have the capacity to recognize "similar situations," which requires that another dimension of meaning emerge. To learn from one situation and apply that knowledge to another situation requires the ability to connect situations that are not flowingly continuous in the way that the perception of a sound is continuous though changing during the hearing of the sound, or the perception of a bit of food is continuous during the act of engulfing it.

To perceive a set of experiences that do not occur immediately following one another as being "similar" to one another requires an experience of grouping that cannot itself be a sensuous feeling. The same is true of perceiving a given group of objects all present at

once as "similar" to one another, as being "of the same kind." Nor can "grouping" be based on a "mental" act of generalizing. The ability to generalize rests on perception of meaningful similarities, not the other way around. Without direct experience that situations resemble one another more and less and that "things" (including activities) are linked by "kinds," generalization and conceptualization would be impossible. Without such direct insight into similarity and dissimilarity, language could never come into being.

The rudiments of this general experience could appear, as I have commented, very early in the evolutionary sequence. In fact, researchers are not sure how extensive learning is to life. It may extend clear through the protoplasmic order altogether.[5] In any case, this general dimension of meaning is also oriented to activity, to the entity's "sense of significance."

Language

Let me make clear at the outset that language is a vast subject in which thousands of researchers and theorists are making their way. I have no intention of surveying their work, or of attempting to answer the myriad important questions alive in linguistics, semiotics and semiology. I merely wish to develop some points that are important for the discussion under way.

Language relates to the dimensions of significance and meaning in human experience somewhat the way the biosphere relates to the dimensions of geochemistry and the atmosphere. Language emerges from developments in significance and meaning and could never come into being without them. Once language exists, however, it enters immediately into the nexus of mutual self-creation with significance and meaning, and they

can never be as they were - any more than the earth can ever return to its situation before life evolved.

Like the biosphere, moreover, language must be understood as an interactive field of many members. It seems easy to understand how ordinary words in their ordinary sense have "meaning" - a word seems to refer to a type of object, action or quality of experience. This is as misleading as thinking that ecosystems are but a collection of individual lives. Experience does not come in the form of single entities, nor does language exist as single words. Experience and language are fields of entities. In each field there are highly articulated relations among the entities, and there are deep, interpenetrative relations between the two fields.[6]

> It is not so much the individual word or sentence that "stands for" or "reflects" the individual object in the real world, but rather that the entire system of signs, the entire field of the <u>langue</u>, lies parallel to reality itself;[7]

When we speak together, talking and listening, writing and reading, every word adumbrates a vast store of associations, including its "opposite," "similar concepts," words that sound like it, concepts similar to those words, affective associations with all of the above, and so on. Every sentence and paragraph adumbrates correspondingly huge "icebergs" of association. When we speak we speak a <u>language</u>, not merely words and sentences, and the whole language forms the background against which speaking stands out. Moreover, when we talk together, we change the language: no word is used with precisely the same shades of meaning twice, and whenever anyone speaks "usage" transforms.

Like experience, language is open. It is possible constantly to develop new meanings, to creatively expand language. At the same

time, language enters into the generation of experience, and therefore is no "neutral tool" to describe experience. Human experience from a very early age, certainly far earlier than actual language acquisition, is permeated with symbolic action and awareness. From this point forward language and experience are interpenetrative fields in mutual self creation.

Meaning, as we have seen, is related to an entity's total situation and not merely to this or that part of it. The significance of any part of a nexus of mutual self creation does not exist "independently" of that nexus, but is itself mutually self creative with the significance of the other part. Meaningful experience involves a whole nexus of mutual self creation in which the "entities" and their "relations to one another" are inseparable. Language too exhibits this property.

No matter what level of organization one chooses to look at, language can only be described by taking the "bits" and the "relations" together at the same time. Whether one is discussing phonemes (meaningful sound bits), words, sentences, or even whole books, the meaning of the bit under consideration can only be grasped in relation to other meanings existing at the same level of organization. Metaphor "refers to" <u>patterns</u> of meaning, not to individual "meanings."

Language comes into being speaking a whole world, which it gradually articulates. It does not arise first as one disconnected word, and then another which are gradually "put together." This is important to grasp, both in terms of the evolution of language, and in terms of individual development.

The first clue comes from the fact that meaning is situational and relates to activity. "Primitive communication" cannot possibly be some sort of disinterested single naming of "things." The meaning brought into focus by language is a whole situation, a world of meaning for the speaker.

Even gesturing requires and thrives not on single things to be "pointed out" but on the network of relations enmeshing the things. To point to some object as a means of drawing your attention to it requires you to know where in your perceptual world to frame your attention. If I point to my coffee cup on the table, only context will let you know if I'm pointing at the cup, the table, or the wall behind. If we are in the African bush, looking out across a landscape, my gesture may point to animals, to particular bushes, or to the beautiful color of the sky near the horizon. The gesture of pointing goes on to infinity. It is only because the gesture is part of a context of meaning that we can, by means of gestures, signify objects to one another.[8]

Early language is simple and has a small vocabulary. Indeed, symbolic communication begins well before verbal language, as anyone who has ever spent time with small children can easily attest.[9] Yet even a one word language represents a whole context of meaning.

A child whose only "word" is "mama" does not mean, by it, anything like the meaning one gets, as an adult, from a detached, analytical feeling of the meaning of "mama." No one can clearly state that child's experience, but obviously the word means a great many "things" to the child. It can be used in various situations and carry many shades of meaning. When that child calls "mama," she is expressing her situation as fully as she is able. She is not naming an object.

Imagine, if you will, a band of early humans, just on the threshhold of speech. Like this pre-verbal child they must have had a rich context of body symbols and expressive noises. How can we imagine them developing speech? By painfully, over centuries, inventing, one word at a time, a vocabulary for talking about their situation? Or by finding expression for whole situations, and then over the years learning to "unpack" the situations into constituent elements? Since we have seen above that single words rely on their relations with other words for their meaning, the choice seems clear. The first expressions must have referred to situations, and not merely to some element of the situation. We can imagine expressions meaning, e.g.: "Look there," several expressions meaning "I feel_____," expressions meaning "danger be on guard," and so on. What I cannot imagine is people sitting around saying, e.g., "tree," or "walking," or some such. It seems more likely that the desire and need for more articulate communication would lead to progressive expansion of earlier, less articulate signs.

The existence of language rests on our metaphoric ability. Metaphoric meaning in ordinary language is when we use one word to stand for another; the stand-in is a metaphor for the unspoken word. Language itself is letting sound stand for meaning. Connecting sound and meaning is a metaphoric act, the sound refers to the meaning-which-it-is-not much as the metaphor refers to the word-which-it-is-not.

Language is a field of interacting entities which stands as a metaphor for experience (another interactive field) when we speak.

Summary and Conclusion

All entities engaged in relations of mutual self creation have significance for every other entity in that nexus, and every entity has

significance for every other. Each entity engaged in relations of mutual self creation has its own "sense of significance" which is its field of meaning. Language arises out of experienced meaning. Once it has come into being, language enters into mutual self creation with meaning and they become inspearably involved. To learn a language is to learn a field of experience, enriched, expressed and limited by the structure and vocabulary of that language. To speak a language is to reverberate ancient meanings, to be bound to the deep tradition embedded in language. We are led to the conclusion that our linguistic heritage, and beyond that the whole cultural system of meanings that we learn as we learn to perceive, is involved in creating the very experiences of meaning we use the language to express.

All speaking thus comes out of and necessarily relies on a speech tradition, on having learned how to speak. This is but another reflection of the more general fact that every element of a nexus of mutual self creation gains its significance through its relations with the other members.

In any case, all this is important for us as speakers. In the last chapter we came to the conclusion that perception is not registration of objects. Now we must say that speaking is not reflection of meaning. Language and meaning are profoundly mutually self creative. The meanings we experience are inseparable from the language we have learned to use. The unique point of view of every speaker exists in a context of society and history that is utterly <u>given</u>, as the context of speaking. Again we find that primordial nexus of mutual self creation between individual and social. The unique creative act of personal self expression takes place in a traditional, received medium that permeates to the core of the self to be expressed. Yet language can only exist

and be transmitted in such individual, creative moments of communication. Moreover, just as received language reinforces learned experiential habits, so changed language can help engender new experiential forms. This fact will prove important at several points in Book II.

In terms of what is going on right now between you and me, we can be aware of several facts. This book is a communication, and its goal is to enter into a process of communication. The model of mutual self creation suggests that becoming is a continual part of the being-together that is being. "Truth" in this context is not a fixed entity that could be sought and expressed "once and for all." There are no "eternal ideas in the mind of God" that could be reflected in a human system of thought and "be true." Truth has to do with the direction of the process of becoming, with "aim" rather than with static form. Sharpening a knife blade is known as "truing" as is straightening the barrel of a rifle. This carries some of the sense I wish to express. Communication is a process of sharing individual situations on behalf of truing our mutual situation, which includes truing our situations with respect to one another. Communication is conversation, is an interaction among an open community of members. So a book, even though it looks like a finished object, is really a changing moment in a conversation. What is remarkable about books is what they allow is to preserve voices so profound they continue to participate in the conversation long after their speaker's death (for instance Plato's dialogues). What is dangerous about books is our tendency to receive them as fixed systems to be "believed in" and "defended" or "rejected," when in fact they are helpful offerings to the process of truing mutual becoming.

So in talking to you in this book, I certainly don't pretend to present "The Truth," though I do hope to participate in truing. Therefore I bespeak my situation, including my sense of our situation, as honestly and clearly as I can, and I extend my experience of the "we" to which I belong to the farthest extent of my experience of mutual self creation. I speak about a very broad scope and not about purely "personal" or "subjective" experience. In doing so, I inevitably reflect my actual situation as a historical, economic, socialized and acculturated person. Nor could it be otherwise, for my very identity incorporates these elements. But this is no falsification of speech, for it is the only context in which speech is possible. Falsification is pretending to be some sort of abstracted, non-situational creature none of us could ever be.

At the same time, a situation is a feeling of the whole nexus of mutual self creation. Each location in the nexus reflects the whole nexus as it exists at the point. So each person has an experience of her whole situation, and therefore of our whole situation, and each of our contexts of meaning, refers to the whole of experience. It is no extraordinary puffiness for any of us to talk about matters of broad importance and deep meaning. We imply them in every word we speak, and we experience them in every moment of existence.

Conversation is a process of agreeing about meaning in which both what we say and what we experience is transformed. This book is intended to be part of such a conversation.

But on what basis shall we arrive at an agreement? Particularly if we do not share the same traditions or if we want to transform our traditions? What counts as evidence when we want to begin to talk together about experience?

First of all we begin a conversation with a willingness to converse. For there is another kind of talking, in which each party repeats his "position" over and over again, often in a surprising number of disguises. In such talk there is no sense of entering into a process of becoming, but a sense of holding onto a rigid form. In such talk, rather than sharing personal situations to discover shared situations, we try to get other people to "agree with" our own situation - a fruitless and impossible task.

Once we have decided we want to talk together, we are confronted with the need to provide evidence to one another. Either we already agree about what is being said, in which case we share evidence for our agreement, or we have not yet reached agreement, in which case each of us is called on to "provide evidence" for the other so that "inspecting the evidence together" we may eventually reach closer agreement. But what is evidence, and what can count as evidence in a universe where "what is experienced" cannot be separated from "who experiences" or from "what it means and how it is understood"? What counts as evidence in a universe where experience itself can undergo modal shifts? What "evidence" for three dimensional space could one present to an infant who had not yet achieved that experience?

CHAPTER IV

EVIDENCE AND EXPERIENCE

Experience is evidence. When I experience something directly, it is evident to me. The very idea of evidence is based on this primeval mutual presence. What cannot be directly experienced cannot be given in full evidence. The very notion of reality arises in direct experience as we experience different kinds of evidence, different modes of experiencing. I directly experience some situations as real, some as fantasies, some as dreams, some as memories of reality, some as memories of dreams, and so on. The fundamental sense of evidence, then, is simply this primordial presence which is direct experience.

As we have seen, we directly experience not single objects isolated in time and space, but an open field of mutually interacting entities. Within this field, I am able to focus on various of its constituents and their meanings. These constituents need not be individual entities, or even physical constituents at all. For instance when I experience the fact that the scene I am now engaged in is a fantasy, there is no physical constituent of the field that labels it "fantasy." Such global meanings, including meanings relevant to the whole nexus, are part of direct experience.

Now in all of its dimensions, experience must be characterized as open. I may discover that what I took to be a fantasy is in fact actually happening and there really are Martians landing on my front

lawn. The rock I am looking at may prove to be a turtle. My wife may suddenly reveal hitherto unsuspected facets. Therefore evidence is never altogether certain. What is evident to me now may be elusive tomorrow and contradicted the next day. Nonetheless, now what is evidence to me is certainly so. The rock I am looking at is, for me, a rock, and if it turns into a turtle and walks away, I will be surprised.

Not only can individual elements of experience transform, but experience as a whole nexus can change in terms of the structure of the relations of its members. This is what happens when a child discovers three dimensional space. It is also what happened in Western Culture with the Copernican Revolution.

In fact, culture itself is a prime example of the formal, structural openness of human experience. As we have seen above, the whole context of experience varies dramatically from culture to culture. As E. T. Hall says:

> People from different cultures not only speak different languages but, what is possibly more important, inhabit different sensory worlds.[1]

Experienced time and space, the experience of relationship between individuality and society, the categories into which experience naturally falls, the structure of interpersonal relationships, all of these and more vary in their fundamental structure from culture to culture. Therefore, what is evident varies in a similar manner.

Like language, evidence is a tradition, not merely a momentary experience. But like language, evidence is open to change and development. It is even, perhaps, possible to learn different structures of experience just as it is possible to learn new languages.

Therefore in talking together, we must learn not to negate each other's expressions too quickly for lack of evidence. Every individual's experience is formed and limited by social context and personal history. The fact that I have no confirming experience for what you say is no final test. You may be mistaken or you may be talking about experience that I simply have not had, like describing the Systene Ceiling to someone who has not been there. Or you may be talking about a whole field of experience, structured differently than my own field of experience, as when a Japanese person talks to a Westerner about ma - the meaningful space between objects. It is so easy to assume that one's own experience is "correct," is true evidence, and that when someone else says something radically different that the person is "wrong." It is especially easy for us to believe that the root forms of Western experience are "right" and that other cultures, which experience and describe the world in other terms, are simply mistaken.

It is more fruitful to see that cultures express possible experience. Experience is not fixed and given. Every culture has and transmits an experiential nexus of mutual self creation in which people can live and have meaning. It may be possible to evaluate these nexus with respect to one another. It is surely not possible to declare one or another right and the rest "wrong."

In fact, even evaluating cultural nexus of experience is extremely difficult, for "what matters most," the "value" for evaluation, is itself a matter of cultural agreement and learning. Nevertheless it may be that by talking to one another we can discover mutual affirmations. Perhaps conversation among cultures can bring about the same kind of sharing and transformation as conversation among individuals.

In the rest of this chapter, I will be talking about "what matters most for human life" and about "what I believe to apply to the human condition." Again I must affirm two things: first, my experience is that these affirmations have universal application; second, I have no way of knowing how much that seems universal to me is merely learned and projected. Only by entering my voice into the ongoing conversation is it possible to find out.

Not only does experience differ, fundamentally and structurally from culture to culture, but even between individuals of the same culture, or between different periods in the life of one individual, experience as a global whole can differ deeply and dramatically.

I have spoken several times about infants' experiential insight into three dimensional space. I would now like to develop this theme as an example of what I call "enlightenment experience," or "deepening." Let us examine our example in greater detail. What happens when a child's experience shifts? In one sense, her whole field of experience is utterly changed, never to return to its former condition. In another sense, the whole field of experience is exactly as it was. When the child develops three dimensional experience, it is not that the world and her body "become" three dimensional. Rather, the child realizes "what was there all along." Make no mistake, I am not saying that we can see that the child discovers what was already there. The experience itself includes this sense: "Ah, so the world is really like this! And it was this way all along!"

All insight is like this. One does not create some quality or structure of experience ex nihilo; rather one discovers it "already there." Again this quality of "always already" comes from the essential

openness of situated experience. In perception, for instance, whenever I discover some new perceptual entity I find it "always already" there when I perceive it. If I walk down a road and into hitherto unexperienced landscapes, I find them "always already" waiting for me to experience them.

Enlightenment goes beyond the always already. It includes also a sense of deepening, of "getting" a meaning at a deeper level of significance than heretofore. Who can doubt that the child's experience of herself and her world is "deeper," more in touch with the actual situation, after her discovery of three dimensional space? This is a quality enlightenment shares with all insight. The sense of insight is a deeper coherence between meaning and significance. I reserve the term "enlightenment" for insight in which experience as a global field changes structurally. I will discuss this idea at greater length in Book II, Chapter III.

Experience also can undergo global transformation which is not enlightening or deepening, but which is nonetheless radical and complete. Paradigms for this include madness, brainwashing, and processes of reacculturation in which a person's root experience moves from that of his birth culture toward that of another culture.

Finally, in this discussion of the elasticity and openness of experience we must include states of consciousness. Even for a single individual, what is evident depends, in part, on that person's current "state of consciousness." Charles Tart has done the pioneering work on states of consciousness.[2] He points out that all of us are acquainted with various "regions" of our experience, and that it is difficult, if not impossible, to inhabit all of these regions at once. For example,

Tart points to ordinary wakeful awareness, nocturnal dreaming, and so-called lucid dreaming in which the dreamer is "in control" of the dream process. Each of these states is distinctly different from the others. Tart discusses these three states as they relate to two factors of awareness - the ability to use rules, and the ability to have vivid images. In ordinary wakefulness, we are able to use rules well, but our images lack full vividness. In nocturnal dreaming, on the other hand, images are vivid and real, but we can barely apply logical rules, if at all. In lucid dreaming, both these traits are high - images are fully real but one can act intentionally and follow rules.[3]

Tart also suggests several other "states": hypnosis (p. 71f), meditative states (p. 82f), drug induced states (p. 146f) and "mystical or higher" states (p. 277f).

> . . . The point is not that there is never any overlap between two d-SoC's (discrete States of Consciousness) (to the contrary, all the ones we know much about do share many features in common), but that a complete <u>multidimensional</u> mapping of the important dimensions of experiential space shows this distinct clustering . . . d-SoC's are not just quantitative variations on one or more continua . . . but qualitative, pattern-changing, system functioning differences.[4]

States of consciousness differ not because individual components vary, though they may. States of consciousness differ because the patterns of meaning differ. "Pattern differences are the main defining factor."[5]

In effect, "states of consciousness" are another way of talking about transformable structures of experience. Culture, as discussed above, could be understood as "sets" of states of consciousness whose members vary from culture to culture. What in one culture might be a baseline state of consciousness (a world interpenetrated with spiritual

entities) might in another be an insane state of consciousness (hallucination), while what is significant in one culture's baseline state (e.g., ma for the Japanese) may be entirely absent from another culture's baseline.

Similarly a child passing from two to three dimensional space can be considered to be moving from one "state of consciousness" to another. I will avoid using the term "state of consciousness" because of the philosophical difficulties surrounding the term "consciousness." It would, I feel, drag a red herring across our path. Nonetheless, what are called states of consciousness provide further evidence for the mutability of experience and of what is evident in experience.

This mutability does not, however, leave us with no evidence. Rather, mutability itself is evident and provides us with the opportunity to examine and inquire into experience in an ever expanding and deepening way. Experience is a transforming field of mutual copresence.

Not only individual entities, but even very general characteristics of experience as a field phenomenon, may become evident. The insight that experience is mutable is such a general characteristic.

Nor is it possible to outstrip the evidence. The greatest agnostic doubt is as much due to what is evident to the doubter as the deepest belief is to the believer. Whatever is directly experienced, whether as a concrete individual object like "these printed pages" or as a general attribute of experience such as openness, is evident in that experience.

What is evidence then? Evidence is what is given in experience. What is given in experience is generated through a complex mutually self creative process in which both individual and society play a role along

with other entities. So evidence, as given, is partly a socio-cultural agreement, partly an individual insight. It depends in part on the language in which it is expressed, for that language pre-forms the experience of the speaker and the confirming experience of the listener. Evidence is open, developmental and transformational. What seems perfectly evident today may tomorrow be evidently otherwise.

Just as truth appears, to mutual self creation, to be "truing," to be guidance of process, rather than fixed eternal form, so evidence appears to be a field of exploration, conversation and agreement. What is initially evident is by and large what one has been taught to experience. What may become evident is an open question mark.

This issue is especially important with respect to works like the current one. Our culture is not oriented toward experience of mutual self creation. Quite the opposite is true in fact. Therefore, well acculturated people may have no experience to confirm what I am saying here. In fact, many may have rather strong negative reactions to the whole idea. Neither of these facts prima facie negate the viability of what I have to say. This question is taken up in greater detail in the Afterword to Book 2, when I discuss the question of confirming experience.

I have mentioned above the difficulty inherent in trying to symbolize experience: experience names the whole and can only be symbolized by some part of itself. There are three ways of dealing with this problem. One way is to speak analogically, as I do when I call experience a "field." Indeed, this term, taken originally from the expanse of ground that a farmer tills, can only metaphorically refer to the quality of experience as a whole.[6] Another way of

speaking is to speak negatively, as I do when I say that experience is not simply a registering of the outer world by the inner world, or that mutual self creation is not causal or dialectical. The third way of talking is a kind of invitation, via a set of experiential experiments, for you to find out for yourself.[7] This is the technique of the Afterword.

Having dipped into the deep waters of language and evidence, we are prepared to continue our meditations on experience. Finally I will be able to drop some of the cumbersome locutions I've been forced to use and begin to talk more simply.

First Person Meditation

One of the primary characteristics of human beings is that we learn to organize our self understanding in personal stories. Individual people understand ourselves as life-histories, as the birth-to-death continuity of a personal identity. Another way of getting at this is to say that people learn to say "I." By virtue of each being self-identified birth-to-death life histories we are each creatures who refer to ourselves as "I." I am "I" to myself as you are "I" to yourself. Even though the concrete specifics are utterly different, there is something very deep here that we share. In fact, what we share requires that the concrete specifics be unique.

We share "being-I." What does this mean? Our identities are distinct, our situations are different, our stories are different even though you may appear in mine and I in yours. All this is necessary; otherwise we would be the same person. We are situated with respect to each other. Yet the form of our being situated is similar. We each are living a story. There is an old saying that

each person is utterly alone and that that aloneness is profoundly shared.

In the rest of this section, I am going to explore the realm of sharing called "being myself." What I propose is a kind of "First Person Meditation." In ordinary language, if I say "I," you say "you." (E.g., "I wrote this dissertation.") In First Person Meditation, when I say I you say "I." (E.g., "I call myself 'I' and understand my life as a birth-to-death story.") In this way I hope to reflect the structure of this deeply shared way of being situated.

Before going ahead, I need to raise some warnings originally discussed in the previous chapter. What any person means by "I" is deeply personal: both individual and social. Not only is my life experience unique, but my experience of "being myself" has developed culturally. The way I say "I" I have learned with my language. What I believe and experience about the meaning and potentials of myself and of "being a self" are profoundly influenced by cultural forces. At the same time, <u>something</u> does seem to be shared even cross-culturally.

In pursuing these meditations with you I am striving toward the deepest levels of sharing we can reach. At the same time, no one can claim to have reached formulations that are not fully situated and which do not reflect personal experience. What follows then are my own meditations on what we share as "being myself." I will be reflecting only some very general structures of being myself that seem crucial to me for this ongoing discussion. I do not propose to make any complete investigation of the shared field of "being myself."

Nor do I intend to talk about the structure of personality. Undoubtedly there are psychological functions and patternings that we

share, and doubtless some of these apply cross culturally. However, these are not the structures with which I am concerned. Rather, I want to focus on some very general features of personal experience, working from the mutually self creative image of experience developed above. We have found that body and world, mind and body, mind and world are not dichotomous terms opposed to one another, but entities of mutual self creation interpenetrative with one another in being and becoming.

Let us begin, then, our first person meditations. I am at this moment living in a situation. At every moment I "find myself" in a situation that is <u>given to</u> me, that encompasses me in a network of given circumstances, including the circumstances of my birth and parentage and so on. This world, that was "there" before I was born and will continue beyond my death, encompasses me, I am "in" it. At the same time, I belong to it, I am part of it. My body is made up of earth and water, my wastes are nutrients for the soil, my language is a social gift: I am part of the world, and I find myself in it.

In another sense, I find the world in myself. Anything I experience exists for me <u>as</u> I experience it and in no other way. There is nothing for me outside my experience. What is now "outside my experience" appears within my experience as open horizons, as the potential for change. Something is only "outside my experience" if I experience it to be so. Thus what is outside my present experience is my potential experience.

I have tried throughout this conversation to avoid loaded words as much as possible. Now I have to take on a loaded term - "unconscious." Please bear with me. I've avoided "consciousness" so far because the term raises more problems than it solves. "Experience" is, for me,

a more helpful concept. In talking above about "what is outside experience" I was talking about a region analogous to "unconsciousness." "To be conscious" is roughly comparable to "to experience." Sense-perception is a way of being conscious, as is feeling emotion, or dreaming, or any other sort of experience. Anything of which I am in any way aware I am "conscious-of" in that way. If I can refer to "the unconscious" or to "unconscious ideas" it is because I am conscious of them. Any sort of awareness-of or ability to point to some entity is consciousness-of that entity.

There is, of course, a great deal that I could be conscious of that I am not. Thus all learning is becoming conscious of what was formerly unconscious.

Freud hypothesized that there are some things of which I am unconscious because I am hiding them from myself. This "unconscious" is really a special sort of "conscious" since I have to know what to hide from myself. Learning not to hide these things from myself is part of therapy and is one way that what is unconscious can become conscious. There are, however, many other ways.

I can become aware of whole entities, entire states of consciousness previously unknown to me, and I can also progressively clarify entities, relations, and even whole fields of entities-in-relation: these may be perceptual objects (like a distant tree that I approach walking); physical skills (like learning how to ski); new states of consciousness (like learning to meditate); new ideas (like study and discourse); new identifications of parts of my proprioception (like biofeedback training).

My ordinary experience has this quality: I could always learn more about it. Progressive clarification can always be carried further

and I can always be further enlighted about the self/world nexus as a whole.

The only sort of consciousness that can meaningfully be mentioned is a potentiality for consciousness. The only sort of unconsciousness that can be identified or pointed to is one which has already in some measure become conscious and requires progressive clarification. If there is some existence that is utterly inaccessible to experience, I have no knowledge of it, and no way to find out anything about it, not even its existence.

The upshot of this discussion is that the whole world is, insofar as it exists at all for me, wholly contained within my experience. If something (you, for instance) exists for me as an independent entity, distinct from myself, it is only because you appear that way to me within my experience. Since there is nowhere outside my experience, for me there is nowhere outside my self.

Thus the world and I mutually encompass one another. I find myself living in a world given to me and enveloping me in a situation I only partially create. The world envelops me. But I find the world in my experience and insofar as it has any existence at all for me, it exists as my present or potential experience. I envelop the world.

To condense the discussion of the last two pages: At each moment (right now), I find myself in a field of entities-in-relation of which I am a member and which encompasses me, yet which I encompass.

The whole of this nexus is open, and can transform at deep levels. In my life I have had enlightenment experiences, such as when my spatial perception deepened into three dimensions, or when my social perception deepened so that I was able to take other people's feelings

into account in my actions. There is always the open possibility that further such experiences are possible; nor can I know for certain before hand, since the nature of the shift rests on my prior ignorance (unconsciousness). I may grow into new experiences of my self and my world hitherto unimagined by me.

There is nowhere outside my experience that I can use to evaluate my experience. I must look within experience itself to see if I can find bases to guide my experience, to "true" my life course.

What is it in my experience that is most meaningful to me? Is this meaning congruent with the true significance of my situation? How can I tell? What difference does it make if I realize that experience is a nexus of mutual self creation in which I am fully involved?

To answer these questions it seems important to get a sense of my experience as a whole. I don't necessarily mean by this a close examination of my personal history, though that may be useful. I really mean a sense of my experience as it exists right now, felt as a global whole. When I relax my focus on the particular parts of my experience, I can find a sense of my whole experience not in terms of its "content" but in terms of its "quality."

What is the overall quality of my experience right now? Is it full and open? Or pinched and grey? How satisfied am I with the quality of my experience? Is experience painful? Do I feel centered and open, or am I some degree of off-balance? To what extent do I experience myself as belonging congruently in my experience? Do I rejoice in experience? What other qualities would I like in my sense of whole experience?

The image of mutual self creation teaches us that experience is a complex whole in which we are intimately involved: my very identity

and my perceptual world are themselves nexus of mutual self creation. This whole is inevitably much greater than any of its members, including me. My "given situation" includes aeons of evolution and ages of social and cultural development that are simply given to me as part of myself. At the same time, as a member of this nexus of relationship, I participate in the being and becoming of all its members. Even my given situation is uniquely mine and it is within this situation that I am able to make my creative contribution to the whole. My situation reflects the whole of experience; my given situation as a human animal on the earth reflects the evolution of the solar system as well as that of life on the planet. It includes as well the being and becoming of all those social and cultural forces and entities that have influenced me. Another way of saying the same thing opens up different dimensions of meaning: all of experience is present to me as my given situation; my situation encompasses experience uniquely and fully. All this is just more personal ways of saying that each member of a nexus of mutual self creation is involved in and involves all the others, and that I am a member of a field in mutual self creation.

Understanding and Realization

We have arrived at a critical juncture in our meditations. I am able to affirm that I am indeed a member of a field in mutual self creation. I agree that my given situation reflects uniquely physical, biological and socio-cultural development. I can understand how my experience encompasses the whole world. But my day to day experience does not, by and large, feel like that. I feel more or less like a separate entity, set apart from and over against others. I have difficulty experiencing the concrete ecology of my co-existence on the earth

with the biosphere on which I actually depend. I often experience conflict between my "personal identity" and my desire or need to participate in various groups.

This is an example of the gap between what I call "understanding" and "realization." I "understand" something when I am able to convince myself, based on the best evidence I have, that something is true. I "realize" something when it is an abiding part of my experience. This distinction is especially critical when the "something" is "about" myself, or about the structure of the self/world whole.

What I know to be true about myself and the world is by no means always how I experience myself and the world to be. This is a common experience in therapy. There is often a moment in which the client clearly sees the roots of her compulsive behavior but is not yet able to incorporate that insight in her daily life in a liberating way. It is also a common experience in relation to deeply held religious and philosophical beliefs. Someone may "know" that he is "saved in Christ" while feeling profoundly alienated and lost. Or I may "know" that the world is an integrated whole while feeling disjointed and unconnected.

On the other hand, there can also be great congruence between my understanding and my experience. We have seen above that socialization and acculturation assure a fair measure of congruence between what I believe and what I experience, and between my experience and your experience. Every culture also has developed disciplines for transforming experience in particular directions; every culture has physical, psychological and spiritual ideals and techniques for achieving them. These techniques can be characterized, very broadly, as yogas, therapies, and liturgies.

Yogas are, as I am using the term, disciplines of the whole person in behalf of deep transformation of personal experience in the direction of comprehensive wholeness. The great yogic paths of Indian religion are examples of this sort of technique, but they are by no means the only ones. Christian disciplines such as the Exercises of Ignatius Loyola are yogic in nature.[8] So are the vision quest, sweat bath and surrounding ceremonies of the Native Americans of the Great Plains.[9]

Therapies, as I am using the term, are concerned more immediately with "adjustment" to one's given course of life and social situation. Freudian therapy is an excellent example of this type, where "being well adjusted" is considered a key to mental health. In its strictly secular forms it is a modern invention. Nevertheless, other cultures have techniques for resolving the psycho-social knots we call "mental illness" that are not focused on larger issues of cosmic wholeness. These are what I call "therapies."

Liturgies, in contrast to yogas, are explicitly religious. I studied meditation for a while with a Tibetan Buddhist Rinpoche named Tartang Tulku. He would say over and over: "This meditation I am teaching you is not my religion. It is not Buddhism. I teach religion at another time. This meditation is a discipline for experience. You can believe anything and still practice it." Liturgies, on the other hand, are part of believing communities and are used as part of the common spiritual life. The Roman Mass is a good example of Liturgy, as is what Tarthang called Buddhism.

Obviously these three categories overlap and interpenetrate. Nearly all liturgies include yogic techniques like meditation within

them, most therapies tend toward a fundamental wholeness that approaches the aim of yoga, while most yogas demand a certain degree of moral, social and psychological discipline.

What liturgies, yogas and therapies share is that they are techniques for transforming the structure of experience. Each of them works through a process that includes "understanding" toward an experiential realization that is transformative. In the therapeutic process, merely propositional truth is not yet therapeutic truth. I can know what the source of my compulsions is without being free of them. Therapeutic truth is "truing" of my life course.

The same holds true for yogic discipline. To know that I am a spontaneous and open whole, or that the cosmos is one, or that Atman and Brahman are One, is hardly the goal of yoga. It seeks the active transformation of my experience in the direction of realizing these truths in daily experience. It seeks to "true" me.

It is perhaps more difficult to see how this metaphor applies to liturgy. This is partly due to the discredit that explicit ritual has in a large part of the protestant and secular worlds. One has the tendency to attach the adjective "mere" to "ritual." This is a profound misunderstanding and it bespeaks a profound alienation from the ritual process. Liturgies are metaphor systems that organize the meaning of social and physical time and space. The Catholic Liturgy is not merely "Sunday Mass." The Liturgy is the spiritual discipline of the Church, from the bedtime prayers of the youngest child to the meditations of the Pope. It encompasses the whole year in a liturgical calendar, and the story told through that calendar embraces the farthest reaches of cosmic time. This is characteristic of all liturgy,

and of the ritual cycles of all peoples. They are encompassing systems of organization of "sacred time and space" and of their interpenetration into daily life.

Above all, liturgies are disciplines of practice. To follow a liturgy is to perform a specific set of tasks at set times in a given pattern in behalf of spiritual values. In effect "liturgy" delineates that part of the total ritual process that deals explicitly with "spiritual" matters.

Myth and Ritual

Although I will discuss ritual again in Chapters I and III of Book 2, it is necessary to pause briefly here for a broad consideration of this question. In what I have called "liturgy" above I have been discussing what many people would call the whole of ritual. "Ritual" tends to mean "religious observances" these days. Unless it is degraded to the status of "habitual behavior" (as in "the ritual of brushing my teeth").

I am going to suggest a wider use of the term ritual and its companion term "myth." We have seen that socio-cultural organizations participate in the construction of their members' experience, and that social and cultural forces tend to develop and maintain common experience structure in the individuals involved with them.

Any widespread agreement about experience, then, reflects in part the shared social and cultural patterns of those who agree. There is no "reality" that can even be imagined apart from some living individual in an actual social situation imagining it. There is no "agreement about reality" apart from those who agree. Cultures are not

merely agreements about reality, they are also patterns of behavior that maintain those agreements, and patterns of action in the world based on the agreements. (I do not mean to give the impression that culture is a static entity. This whole nexus of cultural experience is as much in flux as individual experience. Like individual experience it also has its own form of continuity.)

In relation to this universal fact of cultural involvement in experience, I propose the following terminology. "Ritual" is that network of behavior by which we generate and maintain our common experience. "Myth" is that network of expressed agreement within which we carry out our discussions of experience.

Why, you might ask, expand these terms this way, rather than choosing new ones? Because all "systems of knowledge" are mythical. There has been a tendency during the Industrial and Scientific Revolution to believe that the West has found a form of "literal" truth. We must struggle to remember that the map is not the territory, not even our map.

The "Science of Myth and Ritual" has had a great deal to gain from defining myth and ritual as something belonging primarily to other peoples, often "primitive" and confined in our culture to military parades and churches, and, perhaps, political campaigns. But "Scientific Rationality" has been thought to be of sterner stuff, closer to "real reality." This is, of course, the way people of every culture feel about their own myths, which do, indeed, accurately describe the world they jointly experience.

It is certainly true that there is a tremendous break between the world of modern technology and science and medieval Europe, or

13th Century Japan, or life on the American Plains in 500 BC. The break is not, however, that Western Europe "gave up illusion" and invented "true, non-mythical knowledge." The break is that the myth and ritual of Western Europe, the actual shared and acknowledged experience of reality, has undergone a profound change. A new mythology has displaced the old, a mythology with many unique qualities. We discovered above that a culture can be considered as a collection of preferred States of Consciousness. Modern Culture is a radical shift in available and preferred SoC's from anything that has come before it in human history.

The shift is mythic. Shared experiences of reality have changed. It is mystification to call our contemporary agreements and methods "truth" and to set them against other peoples' agreements which we call "myths." We must acknowledge, as most peoples have, that our most profound expressions of "what is" are paltry and halting metaphors for a great mystery that invites our perpetual investigation.

Moreover we have seen that the notion of truth as a static entity that can be grasped and expressed once and for all is mistaken. Even the greatest and most powerful of cultures must stand the test of the question, not of its might, but of the "truing" of its becoming and of the becoming of its members. What matters most about our agreements about experience is not the number of true propositions we can make about the world we experience. Nor is it the number of manipulations we can make on the objects of our experience. It is the qualities and felt significances of our lives as wholes and of our momentary and flowing experience together. We are being and becoming together, and it is the quality of this being and becoming that matters most.

Here we have a criterion with which to evaluate our own culture. How deeply satisfying are the preferred SoC's of that culture? Could we support one another in more generally fulfilling experience? Is it possible that some political and economic problems have roots in the structure of experience that we learn from and teach each other? These questions will be explored in a very preliminary fashion in Book 2.

Now again, as at the beginning of this chapter, I must affirm that this criterion reflects my own personal situation. From my experience what I have been saying seems universally to apply to the human situation. I can only truthfully express this sense and enter it into the ongoing conversation about our shared lives. I do so in hope that the metaphor of mutual self creation can aid in truing the course of our culture which is, I am afraid, quite off the mark.

First Person Meditation - A Summary

Always whatever is central to my experience is surrounded and supported by a peripheral world that shades off into a vague, but never quite absent horizon.

Now, for instance, I sit at my typewriter on my desk chair. I can see the typewriter and the paper, the arms of the chair, part of my desk lamp and the edge of a window. I can feel the chair as I sit on it. I hear the hum and clack of the typewriter, the buzz of passing traffic on the street outside. The chair rests on the floor, a bit of which I can see under the typewriter. It is the second floor of the building, and I am vaguely aware of being supported. Even more vaguely, I am aware of the city I live in, the ocean just to the West, of the whole planet spinning in space . . . . Similarly I am aware of my wife at home putting grout in the bathroom tile, of the President in Washington, and of the backside of the typewriter which I cannot now see.

I am also aware of the continual flowing of experience, in which each "just now moment" imperceptibly runs off into the immediate "just then moment" and in which every just-now-moment opens onto the immediately approaching future. Every experience is given as unfolding in a harmonious but open fashion. A rock may suddenly reveal itself to be a turtle, or even may reveal a human face, winking slyly at me.

This horizon is revealed (thought not fully described) by the universe of significant negations that can be made about an entity, as Whitehead has pointed out.[11] If I say that the rock is not a human face, this refers to its standing out from a horizon of possibility in which it could be.

This openness provides an invitation to further involvement. To touch a rock is an invitation to look at it, to taste it, to tap it and hear its sound. To live in the world of experience is a perpetual invitation to explore, to think, to imagine, to feel.

All of these horizons - the purely spatial horizons of hidden perspectives and the richer horizons of surrounding context - fade out into yet further horizons of fertility, potentiality and openness. Even these horizons themselves are able to appear within that final horizon of infinite mystery and fecundity against which all boundaries, borders and horizons stand out and into which they fade.

I experience a field of entities in relation, in which the relations are as primary as the entities. I experience myself as part of that field, as being myself in relation with the other entities in the field. And I experience the whole field as my own open field of experience. At every moment my experience is multi-sensory, synesthetic, embodied, flowing and open.

Yet there is a gap between the momentary understanding I can attain of these facts and the structure of my ongoing daily experience. I may know that my experience is a nexus of mutual self creation, but I do not yet realize that insight, by and large, from day to day. Although I can at any moment step back and find the whole of my experience, in the hustle of living I seldom integrate a sense of mutual self creation. I can, however, via yogas, liturgies and therapies work on this integration.

Beyond this, however, I must examine the mythology and the ritual of my culture. A major share of my experience grows from socio-cultural learning and reflects shared cultural assumptions. It may be that the culture itself blocks fully satisfying experience in some way. If so, then not merely individual, but shared patterns of belief and behavior will have to change.

In all of this one central fact stands out. Experience is characterized by relations of mutual self creation. The self and the world mutually encompass one another inseparably - they are contexts for their mutual appearance. Just as the body and the world are not two distinct entities, but a relational nexus, so experience itself is a relational network. Individual entities stand out within experience through their relation to the whole, a relation that can never be less than tripartite: entity, background and the experiencing entity. The body and the world stand out by virture of their mutual relations, while the experiencing self discovers itself at once formed by and forming its field of experience.

> The world is inseparable from the subject, but from a subject which is nothing but a project of the world, and the subject is inseparable from the world, but from a world which it projects itself. The subject is a being-in-the-world and the world remains "subjective: . . . subject and object (are) two abstract "moments" of a unique structure which is <u>presence</u>.[12]

CHAPTER V

BOOK 1: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In Book 1 I have clarified the concept of mutual self creation. I have also discovered that human beings ourselves are members of networks of mutual self creation.

In Chapter I I presented two examples to clarify "mutual self creation." The first was a network linking human individuation and social formation; the second was the nexus of an evolving ecosystem. Both cases exhibit certain important formal similarities. In each case entities are linked both in being and in becoming. Human individuality cannot have developed apart from human society; no matter how deeply we probe into their origins, human society and individuality will be co-originative and linked. Similarly, the individuals in an ecosystem belong to species which have developed in mutual adaptation.

Furthermore, the actual concrete relations among members of a network of self creation are a critical factor in their becoming. For instance the actual ecological relations existing today in the United States are creating the conditions for the disappearance of species, drastic loss of topsoil, and other profound system-wide transformations. Similarly, actual current social relationships and beliefs are the context in which contempoary children develop their identities.

Networks of mutual self creation are dynamic interactions; "being" and "becoming" are predicates of one another. Mutual self

creation is an active relationship among entities engaged in becoming together. By virtue of becoming together, and of having become together, these entities also are together when viewed at a moment in time. To turn again to our ecological example: an ecosystem as we experience it today is an intricate fitting together of many many individuals and generations of individuals of different species of plant, animal and protozoa. These entities, these "beings," fit together because they are the latest in a long series of entities that have developed in relation to one another. They fit together because they have evolved in mutual adaptation.

Relations of mutual self creation are unified wholes of dynamic interaction in which each member inhabits a situation (or exists in a context) which uniquely reflects all the other members. They are inherently both unified and dynamic.

In Chapter II I presented evidence leading to the conclusion that perception itself is a member in a nexus of mutal self creation. We found that there is a profound correlation between the body and the world, between the perception and the perceiver, so that they cannot be separated out into our customary dichotomies. The relationships between body and mind, body and world, perceiver and perception are not relationships between separate and distinct entities that "have a relationship." They are relationships of mutual self creation among elements that have no existence apart from one another and their relations with each other.

In Chapter III I touched on the issues of significance, meaning and language. On the one hand, I was able to trace language back to its roots in orienting perception. I suggested that significance is

inherent in the model of mutual self creation and applies to all entities engaged in such relations. This raised the possibility that significance characterizes mutual being and becoming together even on the "purely physical" level. As we will discover below, there is some physical evidence to suggest that this is so. On the other hand, it is also clear that language deeply influences our direct experience. Language does not neutrally "reflect" significance or meaning; it is an active element in shaping them. We are inevitably involved in the creation of our own experience, as individuals and as cultural groups.

In Chapter IV I investigated the possibility that experience itself, viewed in the widest possible manner, is a nexus of mutual self creation. Experience is an open field of entities-in-relation of which I am one and which encompasses me, and yet which is "my" experience which I encompass. This field is open not only in that its members may change (such as new entities or landscapes coming into view) or changes in already existing entities but also in that the whole may undergo modal shifts (such as enlightenment experiences and alterations of State of Consciousness).

It seems that we are profoundly involved in relations of mutual self creation. In the formation of our individuality and our sociality, in the development and the actuality of our ecological relationships, in our perception, and in the very form of experience, we find ourselves engaged as members in relations of mutual self creation.

There is also considerable evidence, some of which is touched on below, that the metaphor of mutual self creation is consistent with the universe described by modern Physics.

Fritjoff Capra has written probably the best and most widely read discussion of the universe described by modern Physics and its similarities to the universe described in some mystical religions. In The Tao of Physics he claims that modern Physics and Eastern mysticism share two great themes. The first is the connected and interpenetrating unity of all things. The other is the intrinsically dynamic nature of that unity.[1] These characteristics, what I have called being and becoming together, are fundamental to mutual self creation, as well.

At the level of "sub-atomic particles, this quality of inter-relationship and mutual self creation are most evident:

> An elementary particle is not an independent existing unanalyzable entity. It is, in essence, a set of relationships that reach outward to other things.[2]

> The world thus appears as a complicated tissue of events, in which connections of different kinds alternate or overlap or combine and thereby determine the texture of the whole.[3]

> We say that the inseparable . . . interconnectedness of the whole universe is the fundamental reality and that relatively independent behaving parts are merely particular and contingent forms within this whole.[4]

This amounts, practically, to a restatement of the theme of mutual self creation. I must leave it to Capra to support these contentions with data from contemporary physics, a task he accomplishes well. Here, however, are a couple of mind-teasers from his book.

Physically, space and matter can no longer be understood as two distinct entities. Matter and space are two aspects of a single underlying field phenomenon.[5]

In Einstein's words:

> We may therefore regard matter as being constituted by the regions of space in which the field is extremely intense.[6]

> The distinction between matter and empty space finally had to be abandoned when it became evident that virtual particles can come into being spontaneously out of the void, and vanish again into the void . . . [7]

Just as matter and space are forms of one another (matter being "condensed" space while space has concrete form via matter) so matter and energy are inseparable. Not only are matter and energy convertible, one into another, according to the famous formula $E=mc^2$. Matter itself must be seen as a form of energy and not as a "substance" or stuff in the classical sense.

> According to (the field theory of matter) a material particle such as an electron is merely a small domain of the electrical field within which the field strength assumes enormously high values, indicating that a comparatively huge field energy is concentrated in a very small space. Such an energy knot, which by no means is clearly delineated against the remaining field, propagates through . . . space like a water wave across the surface of a lake; there is no such thing as one and the same substance of which the electron consists at all times.[8]

Heisenberg said: "(In modern physics), one has now divided the world not into different groups of objects but into different groups of connections . . . "[9]

In this universe, particles are understood as dynamic patterns, or processes:[10] "the whole universe appears as a dynamic web of inseparable energy patterns."[11]

It is, of course, a commonplace fact that modern physics has also bound together time and space into "time/space." Since particles, which we have seen are "matter" and "space," must be understood as "dynamic patterns" and the universe as a "dynamic web of inseparable energy patterns," we arrive at the remarkable conclusion that time, space, matter and energy are in fact integrally interrelated to one

another. They are not four distinct and unique factors of the universe, but mutually self-creative aspects of a single, unified relationship.

Just to boggle the mind a touch further, let me share with you the results of some of the latest work in theoretical physics. David Bohm, in particular, has done work that suggests that every piece of the universe contains all of the information present in the whole universe!

A hologram is a picture made and projected by laser. These pictures create three dimensional images which present the entire object. One can walk around the image like one could walk around the object imaged. If you cut a hologram (the "slide" from which the picture is projected) in half, and then project it, you do not get a picture of half the object. You get a picture of the whole object, half as bright (with half the light intensity). All the information in the picture is contained at every part of the slide. No matter how many times you cut the slide, when you project it, the image is still complete - only the intensity of light will decrease. This metaphor of the hologram is used by physicists to describe the structure of the universe: all the information is everywhere - every part contains the information about every other part!

There is some experimental evidence to indicate that this is the case, but to review it here would be too complicated and take us too far afield from the main point of this book. References are provided for those who would like to pursue this issue more closely, and some dissenting interpretations of these experiments are also provided.[12]

One final point must be noted, however. Karl Pribram, now at Stanford, has demonstrated that memory, too, seems to be organized

in a holographic manner: the brain apparently does not store information in localized positions, but in some matrix or array so that all the information in the brain is everywhere in the brain.[13] If all the information in the universe is contained at every point in the universe, and if all the information in the brain is contained at every location in the brain . . . perhaps the ancient image of the macrocosm in the microcosm is not so far off after all.

One physicist, after reviewing some of the evidence cited in the notes to this chapter, has concluded that all objects that have ever interacted with other objects (and this must mean "all objects")

> constituted an indivisible whole. Perhaps in such a world the concept of an independently existing reality can retain some meaning, but it will be an altered meaning . . . [14]

However we approach the question, it seems we find relations of mutual self creation, whether we look at the physical universe, social and individual existence, evolution and ecological relationship, human perception, or, in the most general and comprehensive sense, experience itself.

What is the significance of our intimate involvement in mutual self creation? What can we do to move from understanding mutual self creation to realizing it? These questions will occupy the next Book of this text.

Here in the summation of Book 1 I will deal with them only in a most general way. At the end of The Tao of Physics, Capra notes that contemporary society is "based on the mechanistic, fragmented world-view"[15] and does not correspond, in its internal structure or in its relation with the world at large, to the "harmonious inter-

relatedness" which characterizes physical nature at every level. He suggests that our very survival may rest on our ability to build a society that does live in harmonious interrelatedness with the rest of existence.[16]

Gregory Bateson makes much the same sort of point at the end of Steps Toward an Ecology of Mind.

> The most important task today is, perhaps, to learn to think in the new way. Let me say that I don't know how to think that way. Intellectually, I can stand here and I can give you a reasoned exposition of this matter; but if I am cutting down a tree, I still think "Gregory Bateson" is cutting down the tree. I am cutting down the tree. "Myself" is to me still an excessively concrete object, different from the rest . . .[17]

He goes on to suggest that we accept no policy decisions emanating from people who have not yet achieved that realization.[18]

We live in a time characterized by great alienation. People feel disjointed and separated from one another, from the natural world, from traditional values, and so forth.

To the extent that we do not experience our connections as members of mutual self creation, to that extent we are alienated from genuine relationship, in which we exist whether we know it or not. Realizing mutual self creation heals the experience of alienation and replaces it with an intimate experience of connection and relationship. The possibility of learning to experience what we have come to recognize as fact - our existence as members of networks of mutual self creation - is the possibility of learning to achieve a tolerable level of social and ecological harmony.

Any culture is a set of deeply shared structures of experience. It may well be that some of the most difficult contemporary problems

in our culture are rooted in these deep structures of our experience. If problems of social, racial and economic exploitation, and problems of environmental poisoning and ecological disruption, and problems of loneliness and meaninglessness have their source in our shared agreements about the structure of reality, we will never resolve them through political or economic methods. We must examine our myths in the light of mutual self creation and in the light of the crisis of human life on the world today. Perhaps a new model of the structure of experience can be useful in opening up creative responses to our situation.

It is tempting to continue to pursue the "metaphysics" of mutual self creation. Indeed there is a great deal of interesting and important work to be done in this field. However, I intend to press on to discuss the more existential and practical significance of the discoveries of these five chapters. In Book 2, Chapter II (Politics) we will have occasion to examine four critical concepts that are at once "metaphysical" and "existential" - Time, Space, Personal Identity and Freedom.

In Book 1 I have established the following:

1. There are networks of entities in relation that exhibit the characteristics of mutual self creation;

2. Human existence appears to be participation in networks of mutual self creation at many deep levels including individuation, perception, and the structure of experience as well as our existence as members of ecosystems;

3. Experience as a global field phenomenon is open to transformation at structural levels in which the self/world complex undergoes fundamental change;

4. The felt quality of experience as a global field phenomenon is the most significant aspect of personal experience.

5. Although personal existence seems to be characterized by participation in mutual self creation, ongoing personal experience does not often incorporate this fact.

This gap between what we experience to be true and what we can understand must be true is a measure of our alienation from our true involvement in experience. Perhaps in learning to move from understanding mutual self creation to realizing it we can learn to replace our shared alienation with shared involvement.

Book 2 deals with some Political, Ethical and Spiritual consequences that flow from the model of mutual self creation. It includes an attempt to define processes of transformation to allow us to move toward realizing mutual self creation in ongoing experience.

BOOK 2

INTRODUCTION

In Book 1, I briefly presented the model of mutual self creation and discussed its philosophical import in human experience. In Book 2 I will be talking about some pragmatic consequences flowing from this model. In Book 1 I was able to present only a sketch of the philosophy of mutual self creation; great regions of work had to be merely suggested and not given. The same will perforce be true of Book 2. Practically working out the consequences of our existence as networks of mutual self creation is an enormous task. I will touch only on certain fundamental issues.

For ease of organization I have divided this book into three chapters. Chapter I introduces some ethical consequences of mutual self creation. Chapter II deals with some of its political significance. Chapter III discusses its spiritual implications. The afterword is a workbook for experiencing mutual self creation. It should be clear by now that these divisions are made solely for convenience. "Spirituality" is closely involved with "Politics" which in turn is intimately linked with the structure of personal experience. They are all engaged in mutual self creation with one another.

In Book 1 I was striving to present a fresh image of the structure of experience. Therefore I tried to begin utterly anew without reference to or argumentation with currently accepted images. In Book 2 I am asking how we can move from our current experience towards a realization of mutual self creation. Therefore I have to take more into account the given situation in which we find ourselves.

I am working from certain assumptions about this situation that I know are not universal. I am convinced that "more of the same" in human affairs and cultural development in the West is not an acceptable course of events. It seems clear to me that we are in the midst of a cultural crisis of great magnitude and that creative change is the only satisfactory response. I do not, for instance, believe that the ecological crisis can be solved by technological means alone; nor do I believe that the approaching worldwide shortage of topsoil is going to be overcome by the invention of a substitute; nor do I believe that any semblance of worldwide economic and racial justice will result from continued international diplomacy and economics as they are done today. The odds simply do not seem to favor it.

There is a great deal of work that has been done documenting the problems facing the modern world. There is no lack of books analyzing the flaws and faults of the culture as it exists. I do not intend to present this material here. For those readers who doubt the magnitude of our risk, or who doubt the role of our own culture in creating and maintaining those risks, I have provided a short bibliography as footnote one to this chapter.[1]

My experience leads me to believe, however, that nearly everybody knows that things have to change. It's just that nobody knows how to change or in what direction to change. For it's clear that the other extant models aren't so hot either. The point is not to adopt Cuban Communism or British Parliamentarianism. The point is to look deeply into this question of how we organize our lives together here on the earth and to find a path that leads to creative transformation.

So in this Book we will be discussing the gap between understanding and realizing mutual self creation and how to narrow that gap individually and collectively.

Inherent in any such transformative process is our inability to see its outcome. This is intrinsic to the form of mutual self creation. We project out habitual structures of experience onto all of our experience, including our most free fantasies of the future. If we succeed in changing the structures of our experience, then the world we actually inhabit and create will differ from this one in ways we cannot now imagine.

This is a frightening fact: if we commit ourselves to change, we cannot know beforehand what we will become; only if we try to remain the same does it seem we forsee the static course of our becoming. (Of course this belief is an illusion. Change is universal and inherent and no amount of clinging and blocking can eradicate it.) This quite rational fear underlies the reluctance of individuals to enter therapy, even when they are in great pain, for at least that pain is a known thing. The same fear makes us reluctant to cast off our cultural conditioning and seek for a new collective agreement about reality. It is only when a person reaches crisis that the openness of change is appealing; it is only when culture is in crisis that we can give up the security of "more of the same."

There is an ancient story, lying deep in the roots of our Western cultural heritage, that is surprisingly apropos of our current situation. It is the Old Testament story of Abraham in the city of Ur. This story was first written down perhaps 3,000 years ago.[2] It may be another 1,000 years older than that.[3] The story goes somewhat like this:

> Abraham was walking in his garden one night in Haran, thinking about his wife there. God appeared to him and said: "Abraham. You know that this is not the way you were meant to live, not the way you want to live. You cannot go on living like this."
>
> "Yes," Abraham replied, "but where will I go? At least I know my way around here."
>
> "Abraham," said God, "You can't possibly see where you're supposed to go from here. You have to make a change, to leave here. But you know what sort of situation you're looking for. Just take off. I'll tell you when you get there."
>
> So Abraham gathered his wife, and his flocks, and his belongings, and he left Ur and began to wander with his people in the wilderness, trusting in God. (See Genesis XII: 3)

We are in Abraham's position ourselves. We can see that we live a way of life that is inhumane, unhealthy and dangerous. We can tell that more of the same will not do. So we must "leave Haran." We must make the commitment to a different and more satisfying shared experience, and we must make this commitment facing the fact that we cannot know exactly what our "promised land" will be like. In fact, we know that any "blueprint for the future" that we proposed now would be permeated with those very experiential structures we wish to transform. We are looking for a process of transformation, not for an image of salvation, a way and not a place. What I am presenting here is not a comprehensive programme or the outline of a revolution. It is my reflections on directions and techniques for the change we wish to undergo.

CHAPTER I

NOTES ON THE ETHICS OF MUTUAL SELF CREATION

The purpose of this chapter is to develop a few of the central ethical themes and insights that arise when we adopt the metaphor of mutual self creation as the key to understanding our actual situation. The chapter is divided into five sections: Ends and Means (An End to the Dispute), Death and Faith, Freedom, Conflict, and The Ethics of Participation.

The first of these, Ends and Means, is a discussion of ethical evaluation in a universe in constant transformation in which there are, in effect, no "ends." The next three sections present an image of four crucial moments in ethical thought as understood with the metaphor of mutual self creation. The last section sketches in the ethical consequences of mutual becoming.

Ends and Means (An End to the Dispute)

"Ends and Means are Convertible Terms"[1]
M. K. Ghandi

One major problem in conceptual ethics, at the most elegant philosophical level and also at the most ordinary popular one, is the question of how to relate "ends" and "means." To what extent is it acceptable to do something "wrong" on behalf of some outcome that is "right"? The issue ranges from "Should I tell my wife 'little white lies' about her looks?" to "Would it have been moral to kill Hitler?"

Once we adopt the metaphor of mutual self creation, it no longer makes sense to frame these questions in terms of means and ends. We have discovered that being and becoming belong to each other. Mutual self creation is at once a form of mutual being and of mutual becoming. The process of creation does not stop; it never reaches an end. Each present moment is, fully; part of what it is is changing. The distinction between means and ends falls apart into a distinction between what is near in time and what is more distant in time. "Means" are activities I already am performing, or activities I will soon perform, or activities I believe I must perform to bring about something I desire. The end is this "something I desire?" But what can I bring into being? And how can I do so?

Everything that I can create exists as a member of networks of mutual self creation. Every act of creation in which I can participate is an act of mutual creation with my context and its members. Thus means and ends do not differ in their essential character; both exist and participate in networks of mutual self creation. They may differ in this respect: means are always some action or actions that I take; ends may also be objects, artifacts, relationships, or actions of other people. Whatever sort of thing the "end" may be, it most definitely is not an end. By virtue of coming into existence and participating in experience the new element becomes a changing part of a changing whole. It will transform under the creative impact of its context while it participates in the creative transformation of that context.

Nor is the way in which an element comes into being extinguished from significance. I have postponed the discussion of Time until the chapter on Politics, for reasons that will be evident then. We have

seen enough to realize, though, that the whole past is actively effective at each moment. The past is everything that is given to the present, the context of possibility. "What is" reflects "what has been" so that the way the present has come into being is reflected in the present.

Each present moment is the end of all that has come before it. Thus any moment or object or relationship or outcome can be seen as an end. The same is true of means; each moment is the means to the future. What stand out for us as "ends" are simply moments that we have prefigured for ourselves as having special meaning. Yet neither our "means" nor our "ends" come to an end; they remain active members of the network of experience.

If we cannot evaluate our actions in terms of their outcomes, since our actions are themselves outcomes and our outcomes participate in action, then how can we evaluate our actions and our aims?

Before plunging ahead at this juncture, I must pause again to remind you and me of a couple of things. "Mutual self creation" is a metaphor, and not "the thing itself." It presents us with an image of experience, not with experience itself. Also, "evaluation" rests ultimately on experiences of meaning and on judgments as to what is most meaningful. These experiences and judgments are inevitably cultural artifacts. I am striving to articulate a universal standard to evaluate acting and intending but my concrete articulation will never achieve such universality. I am serving a process of "truing" and not the expression of "truth." I do what anyone can do: I offer the reflection of our common human situation as it appears in my unique human situation.

We have already discussed the fact that, since experience is continually becoming, truth must be symbolized as "right direction of

becoming." In the same way, actions must be evaluated in terms of their ongoing effect on the quality of relationship within the total network of relationship within which they take place. Thus the answer to the question "Should I tell little white lies to my wife?" depends in part on their impact on the quality of my family relationships.

We have also discussed that from an individual perspective, the quality of my experience as a whole is the most important affair. This is then another yardstick. Does this action enhance the felt quality of my experience as a whole? As a corollary, does it enhance the felt quality of experience of the other members of my network?

These two questions - Does it serve the felt quality of the whole network (i.e., my family)? and Does it serve the felt quality of my individual experience - are not balancing contradictories, or ends of a polar scale. If the metaphor of mutual self creation is true, the genuine interests of the whole and those of its members coincide. If they seem to contradict, then there is misunderstanding of what is best for either the self or the whole.

Within the framework of mutual self creation, it is impossible to separate the good of individuals from the good of the whole and vice-versa. This is especially true when we grasp the fact that individuals continue to have significant impact, in the form of the context of the past, in every present moment that succeeds their existence. When creatures die they do not cease to be part of experience. They become entirely part of the context out of which the present continually becomes. For instance, the fact of the existence of the creatures that first formed the oxygen atmosphere is still a significant part of the context of life. What ceases at death is the opportunity to creatively synthesize experience

from that unique situation. But the having been of that situation remains significant for the becoming of the whole thereafter.

Of course, this attitude requires us to accept that sometimes a personally painful course of action does indeed lead in the best direction. It requires us even to accept our own death as sometimes the best outcome of a situation.

Death and Faith

Any consideration of ends must take into account the "final end" - individual death. There is certainly no question that individual life in the form we know it does reach an end. However, that life's creative participation in experience does not perish with this end. Moreover, living in such a way as to serve this "end," to make one's own death creative, positive and appropriate does not involve any "means" contradictory to this end. Dying is a natural part of living, and dying a satisfying death involves the same elements as living a satisfying life.

In fact, research is increasingly showing that encountering and integrating death, and one's own death, is a necessary step in developing full life.

In a paper on "Death and the Self" presented at a Symposium on Death Education, Dr. John P. Brantner (on the faculty in the Division of Clinical Psychology, Department of Psychiatry and Neurology, University of Minnesota) states:

> We might as well examine, question, and perhaps change our attitudes about death. Unless we do, we cannot become fully realized, fully developed persons. We cannot achieve identity. We cannot achieve selfhood.[2]

It seems, from case study research, that there is a fullness and a richness to life that can be achieved only by integrating the fact of eventual death.[3]

Donald Irish, Professor of Anthropology and Sociology at Hamlin University in Minnesota, at the same Symposium, presented these two cases:

> . . . consider the words of Bradford Smith, who, shortly after learning that he had but a short while to live, expressed his conviction that the attainment of personal maturity by each person requires that he "has learned to face the fact of his own death and has shaped his way of life accordingly." Smith went on to say:
>
> > . . . Then each morning seems new and fresh, as indeed it is. Every flower, every leaf, every greeting from a friend, every letter from a distance, every poem and every song strikes with double impact, as if we were sensing it for the first and for the last time. (NB - which we are)
> >
> > Once we accept the fact that we shall disappear, we also discover the larger self which relates us to our family and friends, to our neighborhood and community, to nation and to humanity and, indeed, to the whole creation out of which we have sprung. We are a part of all this, too, and death cannot entirely withdraw us from it. . . .
> >
> > This relatedness of all life, as it binds us to all that has passed, surely binds us to the future as well. . . .
> >
> > Once we have squarely faced the inescapable fact of our own death, we need never fear it, but turn and live life to the hilt, as we have seen that it should be lived. Then, whether that life be long or short, it will have been a full one.
>
> Abe Maslow, former president of the American Psychological Association who died in 1970, commented upon death in the last tape recording he sent to a publisher. Therein he reflected upon his life since an earlier heart attack, a period he referred to as his "post-mortem life."
>
> > My attitude toward life changed. . . .
> >
> > (In post-mortem life) everything gets doubly precious, gets piercingly important. You get stabbed by things, by flowers and by babies and by beautiful things - just the very act of living, of walking and breathing and having friends and chatting. Everything seems to look more beautiful rather than less, and one gets the much intensified sense of miracles.

> I guess you could say that post-mortem life permits a kind of spontaneity that's greater than anything else could make possible.
>
> If you're reconciled with death or even if you are pretty well assured that you will have a good death, a dignified one, then every single moment of every single day is transformed because the pervasive undercurrent - the fear of death - is removed.[4]

What these two men found was that an encounter with and integration of their death led to a richer and fuller life. They experienced a more vital sensuality, a deeper sense of relationship, and a transformed experience of time. These benefits are available to anyone who encounters and accepts death, while the corresponding losses are inevitable to anyone who denies or avoids death. We will discover in the final chapter of this book that these qualities of fresh perception, present-centeredness and spontaneity, and connectional relationship with all of time and being, are characteristics of spiritual fulfillment as well.

It is not necessary to live in fear of death, to avoid or to deny death. In fact, death is often more terrifying to the "living" than to the "dying."[5] The quotation marks are necessary because, of course, we are all dying, all approaching our death; those who are terminal are simply forced to deal with it.

> Despite our cultural indoctrination, death is not the essence of corruption and negativity. Human values seem to be enhanced when we become aware that death always surrounds us, like the shadow that illuminates the substance. The pervasive dread in dying seems not only to be the extinction of consciousness, but the fear that the death we die will not be our own. This is the singular distinction between death as a property of life and being put to death.[6]

In his book On Dying and Denying, Dr. Avery D. Weisman of Harvard Medical School concludes that "The freedom to die is a natural result of significant survival."[7] That is to say, human life requires a sense of significance and personal meaning, and from such a fulfilled life comes an acceptance of one's own death that transcends fear and denial. In fact, individuals may come to cherish their deaths. Death and dying become significant parts of a significant whole.

> A 93 year old man beamed affirmatively when one of the writers commented, "I think you like talking about your death because . . . well, your death is something you have." "It's mine," the elder rejoined. "Don't belong to nobody else."[8]

Although this story is about a very old man whom we might expect to be "ready to die" such readiness for and owning of death is by no means limited to the very old.[9] Nor, in fact, is it limited to the terminally ill, though our culture does not provide much support for the process. Although a critique of our culture's attitudes toward death could easily find a place in this book, either here or in the section on Politics (or even Spirituality) I will have to omit it for want of space. Some sources are provided in the bibliography for anyone who would like to pursue this critique, along with some sources on the other side.

"Being prepared to die" should not be confused with "being ready to die." To be prepared to die is to accept the human condition; to be ready to die depends on extremity of situation.

We cannot choose not to die. We can accept death as part of life and integrate our own death into our life.

> Death comes not to the dead but to the living. To deny or ignore it is to distort life's pattern. We dread death because we refuse to understand it. As Paz, the Mexican author and diplomat, has insightfully stated, "a civilization that denies death ends by denying life."[10]

This does not mean, of course, that one seeks death out. It means that one accepts death and change, one's own and others' as given facts, as what is. Instead of resenting or fearing my death, I can hope that my dying, like my living, is appropriate to the actual significance of my situation. If it is time to die, then I can lose the freedom to die my own death by running from it. If significant death emerges from significant life, I may erode the significance of my life by hiding from my death.

In his book Rolling Thunder, about the Shoshone medicine man of the same name, L. M. Boyd tells of a time when Rolling Thunder, after much consideration, refused to try to heal an ailing Hopi shaman who subsequently died.

> . . . he explained that things like this needed to be seen in a wider context. It is always necessary to be aware of and consider the entire situation. . . . It is a mistake to think that the only way to help a sick man is to take away the illness.[11]

In the Chuang-Tze, a pre-Taoist text from China, the following stories are told:

> Chuang-Tze's wife died. When Hui Tzu went to convey his condolences, he found Chuang Tzu sitting with his legs sprawled out, pounding on a tub and singing. "You lived with her, she brought up your children and grew old," said Hui Tzu. "It should be enough simply not to weep at her death. But pounding on a tub and singing - this is going too far, isn't it?"
>
> Chuang-tzu said, "You're wrong. When she first died, do you think I didn't grieve like anyone else? But I looked back to her beginning and the time before she was born. Not only the time before she was born, but the time before she had a body. Not only the time before she had a body, but the time before she had a spirit. In the midst of the jumble of wonder and mystery a change took place and she had a spirit. Another change and she had a body. Another change and she's dead. It's just like the progression of the four seasons . . . "[12]

(At another time) Master Ssu, Master Yu, Master Li, and Master Lai were all four talking together. "Who can look upon inaction as his head, on life as his back, and on death as his rump?" they said. "Who knows that life and death, existence and annihilation, are all a single body? I will be his friend."

The four men looked at each other and smiled. There was no disagreement in their hearts and so the four of them became friends.

All at once Master Yu fell ill. Master Ssu went to ask how he was. "Amazing!" said Master Yu. "The Creator is making me all crookedy like this! My back sticks up like a hunchback and my vital organs are on top of me. My chin is hidden in my navel, my shoulders are up above my head, and my pigtail points at the sky. It must be some dislocation of yin and yang!"

Yet he seemed calm and unconcerned. Dragging himself haltingly to the well, he looked at his reflection and said, "My my! So the Creator is making me all crookedy like this!"

"Do you resent it?" asked Master Ssu.

"Why no, what would I resent? If the process continues, perhaps in time he'll transform my left arm into a rooster. In that case I'll keep watch on the night. Or perhaps in time he'll transfer my right arm into a crowbow pellet and I'll shoot down an owl for roasting. Or perhaps in time he'll transform my buttocks into cartwheels. Then with my spirit for a horse, I'll climb up and go for a ride. What need will I ever have for a carriage again?

"I received life because the time had come; I will lose it because the order of things passes on. . . . that's the way it's always been. What would I have to resent?"[13]

Death can appear as a gracious making way for the creative process of mutual self creation. Jay Savage, in his book on Evolution, lists the association of death with individuals as a major event in the history of Evolution.[14] The reason for this is simple. Sexual reproduction provides a method for creating new genetic compounds, increasing the creativity and flexibility of the life system as a whole over the situation in which "offspring" are genetically identical to their "parents." It then becomes necessary for individuals to make way for

their offspring. Imagine for a moment what the Earth would be like if every thing that had ever lived were still on the planet. Obviously that could never occur. There are only so many niches in any ecosystem, there is only so much water for cell fluid, there are only so many nutrients in the ground, there is only so much room and so much sunlight. For the creativity of evolution to take place, the earlier must make way for the later. Parents must leave space for their children, if the parents' own genetic creativity is to continue.

> We wish to re-emphasize what we consider the fully established view - that it is biologically normal for individual organisms to die. Death is now understood to be an important mechanism enhancing the adaptive flexibility of the species . . . Death may be even more critically important in contributing to cultural growth and flexibility than in supporting genetic change. Thus, we may regard death as a major contributor to the evolutionary enhancement of life, and thereby it becomes a significant part of the aggregate "gift of life" that all particular lives should end in death.[15]

Death is a crucial element in the creative process that spawned our species and ourselves. Without death we could never have come into being. In a sense, Death has given us our existence and its possibilities. We are indebted to and part of a network of mutual self creation in which Death is a vital creative member. Thus, Death does not contradict but supports our continued creative involvement in becoming. It is only by passing on that I can become fully part of the context of all becoming. It is only when I make room that the full creative force of my being can be expressed through what I have created.

It is by turning to this immense creative network that we can find Faith as well. I did not direct the course of my coming into being. Humanity did not direct the course of our species' evolution.

There is a vast creative process that underlies our becoming. That process expresses itself in evolution and the development of life, but also in the becoming and changing of the universe at large, for it is this larger process that spawned evolution itself. This great network of being and becoming is fertile and creative, as witnessed by our own evolution. We do not direct this process in the universe, nor even on the earth, nor even entirely within our own personal existence. We participate in it; we have creative opportunities within it.

This great network of mutual becoming, existing as mutual temporal and spatial presence, is creative. It transforms, it changes, it is not the same as it was or as it will be. This whole creative network is the context of my existence, and I can have faith that it flows with continued creativity beyond my ability to imagine. Who could explain to the vanishing dinosaurs that their extinction was a creative step in evolution?

What is exists partly within and partly without our ability to change it. A nuclear war which destroyed the earth, imbalanced the solar system and caused intergalactic tidal waves would do so in an orderly, structured and lawful way in keeping with the nature of the Universe, and with the situation of its various members with respect to Earth when it exploded. Every fission of the bomb, every conversion of earthmatter to energy, every wobble of the solar system, every ripple of the cosmic waves would happen in accordance with the way of the Universe. We could destroy the Earth (perhaps) but we cannot rupture the network of connection and mutual becoming. An exploded earth would become part of the context of the becoming cosmos. That cosmos would go on to spawn unimagined situations, entities and ways of being.

The exploded earth would be part of the context of their coming into being and would participate in their existence. The whole exists as a dynamic relation of mutual self-creation, connected as Time and Space. We are members of this whole, spawned by it through ancient times, part of it forever.

Freedom

Without ceasing to be part of the changing universe, we attempt to direct its course of change and our own becoming. Without complete awareness of our motivations or our abilities or our limitations, we intentionally plan and act to bring about specific events and states. We believe in our power to do so, and there is no doubt that civilization attests to our abilities.

Yet we also know that a great deal of what is is not malleable to our wills. In the contemporary West these aspects are most often represented as Laws of Nature. We can overcome gravity, we may even someday construct anti-gravity devices, but we shall surely never repeal the Law of Gravity. We also symbolize the Given in experience in the dimension of History, both social and individual. We recognize that individuals, forming our personalities in social interaction, are profoundly influenced by our individual history; we also know that each of us is born into a place and time. When we symbolize our own coming into being as human beings in the long dance of Evolution, we intensify our insight into Givenness as History to a high degree.

There are forces and structures, in our field of experience, in which and with which we may act but upon which we cannot act. Even should we somehow destroy the Earth, by poisoning or atomic fission, we would only be obeying those Givens. What is dangerous is not knowing or not accepting what is in fact given.

"Given" in this context has two meanings, both of which are significant, and each of which is tied to the other essentially; the form, in effect, a single meaning composed of a doublet. The aspect of Givenness I have stressed above tends toward a sense of "limitation." Givenness is symbolized by what is beyond our control. At the same time, what is given is our own creative possibility; the "Given" is also a gift. Possibility must be more than "possible" for creative opportunity to exist. Possibility must be actual - concrete and specific - so that my creation is also actual. Present possibility is "conditioned" by past creativity; future possibility will be "conditioned" by my present creativity. The very fact that brings me my limitations assures me that I may be able to effect the course of becoming myself.

If I want to bring something to pass, two things are necessary. It must be possible for me, acting in accord with what is given, to effect this change, and I must in fact so act. If I wish to engage in bringing objects or conditions into existence, I must submit my actions to the Given. When I simply do what I want then I have no choice of what the results will be. There is in effect a sort of Heisenbergian principle of action: the more I just do what I want, the less choice I have on outcomes; the more I want to direct the flow of becoming, the more I must bend to what is Given in Being and to its actual possibilities of Becoming. This flowing Givenness is what I understand to be the Tao of the ancient Chinese tradition, and knowing and choosing what is possible is, I believe, what they called passivity.[16]

Part of this "passivity" or acceptance is the accepting encounter with Death discussed in the preceding section. Death and dying are given, and they offer us creative possibilities of deeper fulfillment in experience.

In fact what I am here calling "passivity" is what I have elsewhere called "experiencing my actual situation." We have discovered in Book 1 that experiencing my actual situation is necessary to fulfilling, satisfying experience. Acceptance is not a form of self abnegation; it is synonymous with self discovery. I and my context "fit" one another perfectly.

Mutual self creation does not give us an image of the person overwhelmed by the flow of surrounding events. Personal development toward satisfying experience does not contradict development of the whole toward the satisfaction of all of its members. For a person to move in her own experience toward fulfillment, spontaneity and peacefulness is not destructive to the wider wholes to which she belongs.

For example, many people in this culture tend to experience conflict between personal freedom and social responsibility. There is a tension between "being an individual" and "going along with the crowd" coupled with tension between loneliness and belonging. We have seen that in fact individuality and sociality mutually sustain and create one another. Individuality and sociality depend on one another and there is no intrinsic conflict between fulfilled individuality and full sociality.

Mutual self creation teaches us to harmonize our understanding of what is good for ourselves and what is good for the whole. When we experience personal and general well-being as out of synch, we are ourselves out of touch with mutual self creation. Indeed, when we experience conflict between social and ecological well-being we are similarly deluded, for, as we have seen, these entities are interpenetrative; they are genuinely non-dual.

Of course simple continuation of the individual, the society or ecology "as is" is not necessarily the proper course. A person may be in need of therapy, a society may be in need of revolution, an ecosystem may be poisoning itself. We have found that being and becoming include one another; standing still is impossible. Whatever course we choose to follow, we must follow some course; we must engage in change. The "right" course may well be one of profound change.

We are faced again with a demand for a gestalt shift of our experience. If we experienced our mutual interpenetration, we would experience directly that what is good for me is also genuinely good for the groups in which I participate. Freedom does not consist in being able to resist the will of the group. Freedom consists in being able to act in accord with the deepest wellsprings of one's own creativity. This creativity is rooted in and participates in one's actual situation, and the exercise of creativity rests on a clear sensitivity to that situation. What is given to me participates in my creativity and what I do and create then becomes part of that larger situation.

Within this context, any experience I have that sets me off as a completely separate entity who could somehow act "in my own behalf" and yet at the same time "against the larger whole" is clearly in error. I exist as a creative moment, as a unique situation; and I do so by virtue of my relatedness to the whole.

Of course, this doesn't mean that every actual group supports the becoming of its members, or that all people who belong to groups act to support and sustain them. Obviously the contrary is by and large true. What is does mean is that this experience of conflict is destructive. It is not necessary to live in groups that stifle

individual becoming nor is it necessary to act "egotistically" or selfishly to attain deep satisfaction. To the extent that the actual experience of mutual self creation is realized, a new set of motivations arise congruent with this new experience of the self.

Certainly mutual self creation points up the essential necessity of a social context. A person who acted out "individual desires" irrespective of their impact on the larger whole could not be living in an experience of mutual self creation. At the same time, the metaphor of mutual self creation allows us to develop a critique of our own culture so that we do not have to submit passively to the "larger whole" of culture as it is given. This critique will be sketched in the next chapter. Fundamentally we must learn the difference between participation and domination. Neither "individuality" nor "society" can dominate if we wish to live in harmony with what is.

Moreover, we must come to understand that we cannot seek to "maximize ourselves" within the networks to which we belong: not as individuals within our social networks, not as a nation among nations, not as a species amidst the biosphere.

Bateson notes in Steps to An Ecology of Mind that the mathematics exist to show that "the continued existence of complex interactive systems depend on preventing the maximization of any variable, and that any continued increase in the variable will inevitably result in, and be limited by, irreversible changes in the system."[17]

> There is (for example) no single variable in the redwood forest of which we can say that the whole system is oriented to maximizing that variable and all other variables are subsidiary to it; and, indeed, the redwood forest works toward optima, not maxima. Its needs are satiable, and too much of anything is toxic.[18]

Too much of "what I want" is toxic to my family or work situation; too much of "what the US wants" is toxic to world politics; too much "what people want" (and too many people) are toxic to the biosphere. Therefore, too much "What I want" is toxic to me, and too much of "what humans want" is toxic to humanity, threatens the context we rely on to support our biological existence. We need to learn to recognize "optima" and to have satiable needs.

A network of mutual self creation is a "complex interactive system." It is inherent to mutual self creation, therefore, that no member can maximize itself (or be maximized) except to the detriment of the whole and, ultimately, to its own destruction.

Freedom is related to truing. My essential freedom is to pursue those global qualities of my experience as a whole that are most satisfying and meaningful. This entails my increasing contact with my actual situation, and my increasing awareness of what I am actually able to do. It leads me to seek the optima for all the elements of my experience on behalf of the well being of the whole and of my place within it. We will see in the next chapter what the political significance of this experience of freedom is. Here it is important to grasp that, within the metaphor of mutual self creation, my self understanding includes the interacting wholes to which I belong and which belongs to me; my self interest is experienced as congruent with the self interest of my supporting networks in the realization that I cannot exist apart from them.

Conflict

Within this experience it is necessary to acknowledge and comprehend conflict. There are two possible ways to approach conflict

within this model. One is to acknowledge that conflict itself may be a creative element within mutual self creation: from conflict and competition there may arise new creative solutions. The second is to recognize that interhuman conflict often arises when the conflicting parties are unable or unwilling to accept an interpenetrative self-experience.

There is not space here for me to develop a full theory of conflict in the philosophy of mutual self creation. However a few comments may prove helpful and suggestive to those who want to investigate this critical issue further. Conflict arises whenever we experience two desires or aims that seem mutually exclusive. Conflict can exist at any level of experience: there is intrapsychic conflict among elements of an individual's personality, there is interpersonal conflict among individual people, and, of course, there is conflict among competing groups, within and between states.

The primary difficulty in resolving any of these forms of conflict arises from the desire of one or more parties to dominate the other. It is this struggle for domination that is unethical from the standpoint of mutual self creation.

Beyond being unethical, it is also ineffective and ultimately impossible. Psychological research has taught us over and over again in this century that repression, the attempt to dominate a part of the psyche, is ineffective and destructive to the person involved. Over and over again throughout human history attempts to utterly dominate people through political means have failed. Indeed, as Bateson has pointed out, the very attempt is paradoxical and impossible:

> Perhaps there is no such thing as unilateral power. After all, the man "in power" depends on receiving information all the time from the outside. He responds to that information just as much as he "causes" things to happen. It is not possible for

> Goebbels to control the public opinion of Germany because in order to do so he must have spies or legmen or public opinion polls to tell him what the Germans are thinking. He must then trim what he says to this information; and then again find out how they are responding. It is an interaction, and not a lineal situation.[19]

Someone attempting an act of domination is as much contained in and constrained by her context as anyone else. It is not possible to dominate context.

It is, however, possible to transform context in such a way that it is no longer supportive. We have already found that maximizing any variable within mutual self creation can lead to profound changes throughout the network. The ethical problem is not to avoid conflict, but to avoid trying to solve conflict through domination, which inevitably means maximization of some variables at the expense of others.

Individuals pursuing conflict must learn not to associate ourselves with a pre-established "position" which we then seek to win. Mutual self creation teaches us to push toward the actual truth of the situation, and to recognize there the significant context of all parties to conflict. In a sense, we may view all conflict within the same frame as intrapsychic conflict. All conflict occurs "within" a comprehensive unity, and not "between" independently existing entities. Conflict emerges when the parties involved are not in touch with their actual situation and with the sources of their most full experience. In such a situation, it is in everyone's best interest to engage in a process that brings them closer to the truth.

As I understand it, this is the goal of the techniques of non-violent action developed by Gandhi, though they were invented and carried out in the socio-political arena and have not been fully applied to interpersonal and intrapersonal conflict.[20]

I do not have the space here to delve deeply into Gandhi's work and ideas. Joan Bondurant, a Professor at the University of California at Berkeley, and a participant in some actions in India with Gandhi, has written a concise volume of her understanding of his techniques called Conquest of Violence.

> (She states) dogma gives way to an open exploration of context. The objective is not to assert propositions, but to create possibilities. . . . The process forces a continuing examination of one's own motives, an examination undertaken within the context of relationships as they are changed towards a new, restructured, reintegrated pattern.[21]

Gandhi says "Satyagraha is not predominantly civil disobedience, but a quiet and irresistible pursuit of truth. . . . "[22]

"Insistence upon arriving at the truths of the situation, together with persistence in exploring new and creative approaches, are fundamental."[23]

One fundamental rule of Gandhi's non-violence is that one may not do or wish harm to one's opponent in the conflict.[24] "In satyagraha there is not the remotest idea of injuring the opponent."[25]

While engaging in active conflict, "the satyagrahi must examine continuously his own position - for his opponent may be closer to the truth than he."[26] Indeed, only someone fully in touch with the total network of mutual self creation would "know the truth" and acting on its basis would be unable to act to harm any member of that network. Even this is somewhat of an overstatement, for we have seen that each member of a network of mutual self creation encompasses the whole in a unique way. Moreover since being is becoming, truth is truing, relates to the course of our becoming rather than to a fixed proposition or set thereof.

Gandhi's outlook dovetails with mutual self creation in another significant way. He firmly perceives the unity of means and ends. "If we take care of the means, we are bound to reach the end sooner or later," he said.[27] "Means and ends in Gandhian satyagraha are distinguishable only temporally. Both means and ends partake of a continuous process."[28]

Whether Gandhi did in fact develop a programme for carrying out these ethical standards must be left for consideration another time. Whether that programme can be adapted to personal and intrapersonal conflict (as Erickson suggests)[29] is also a question that cannot be answered here. There seems to be little doubt, however, that the ideas with which Gandhi was working are in harmony with the ethics of mutual self creation. The convertibility of ends and means is recognized; the necessity of arriving at the actual situation is emphasized; the resolution of conflict as changing relationship towards "a new, restructured, reintegrated pattern" is stressed.

The Ethics of Participation

Ethics, understood within the metaphor of mutual self creation, is not the application of general rules to individual instances. Ethics is the art of right becoming and of right participation. An ethical actor must be able to respond to each situation as it is, and not as an example of a principle.

We cannot imagine that we are either "in control of" or "outside of" the situation in which we act. We exist as members of a network of mutual self creation. Within this network each person is a belonging participant. I do not dominate or control the network to which I

belong, nor do I have a detached perspective from which to analytically dissect it. Ethics is the art of creative participation in the direction of full and satisfactory experience.

Within this understanding, "full and satisfactory experience" becomes the main guide for action. What does this mean? We have seen above that the quality of my own experience as a felt whole is critical to me. I would suggest that this felt quality is "better" - feels better - when it is peaceful, centered, meaningful and spontaneous. To move toward "full and satisfactory experience" is, then, to move toward peaceful, centered, meaningful and spontaneous experience.

This cannot be a purely selfish development. We have seen that this is true for formal reasons. We can also see it from experience. If, for instance, I take something away from someone else and use it for myself, I cannot fully enjoy it unless I block out his feelings of loss and pain. Those feelings are part of what is, and they are available to me, at least in an empathetic way. So to "enjoy" the rewards of my theft, I have to narrow the scope of my experience. Blocking out part of my network, I lose contact with part of the dimension of significance. I lose part of the touchstone of my sense of significance, my meaning. In such a situation, although I may attain a kind of "peace of mind" about material security, it is doubtful that my felt satisfaction would be too high. Peace, meaning and spontaneity are not consonant with an experience narrowed through avoidance or fear.

Personal well-being, and a well guided course of becoming, rest on the widest possible contract with one's actual situation. The more I am in contact with my actual situation, the more I am able to respond to that situation creatively. It is often those parts of my situation

of which I am unaware that upset my plans. So any activity that leads me to evade or block experience rather than fully having it is an obstacle to attaining full and satisfactory experience.

We have seen that it is accurate to say that if I needlessly injure my context, I needlessly injure myself. If I am aware of injuring my context, I have a motivation to stop for my own benefit. If I am unaware of injuring my context, then not only am I unwittingly hurting myself, but I am also blocked from full experience of my situation. Such a block distorts my course of becoming, since I predicate my actions on a mistaken understanding of my situation. The more I am in touch with the rest of my network of mutual self-creation, the more I am able to successfully carry out my motivations and the more I am able to frame goals that are possible to achieve. The more I am in touch with the relation of mutual self creation in which I belong, the more I am able to act fully in my own behalf, in the full awareness that I must participate and not dominate, understanding my need to strengthen the context that supports my existence and its possibilities.

Ethics, then, in a universe of mutual self creation is the ongoing guidance of life in the direction of these values:

Increased felt satisfaction with my global experience (peaceful, meaningful, spontaneous (free), integrated, . . .);

Increased contact with my situation (broader, more inclusive, also deeper, more intimate);

Increased experience of my actual mutual self creation (related, belonging, participating, involved).

Although I have framed these values in the first person, they are not egotistical or solipsistic. As a member of a network of mutual

self creation I participate in the becoming of others, and they in mine. My own becoming is guided by every member of my network, including myself. Truing the course of my becoming involves the whole. So it is in my interests for the whole situation to be in closer contact with itself, and for my whole network of mutual self creation to have increased mutual involvement. Because of my intimate involvement in my situation, the more peaceful, meaningful, spontaneous and integrated it or any of its members are, the greater is my potential to achieve them for myself. And, of course, the more I achieve them, the more they are available to the other members of my network.

This point of view, however, requires a certain acceptance of what is that can be very unsettling, for I must give up the notion of being utterly independent as an ego, as an identity. We touched on this issue in the discussion of death above. If I can accept mutual self creation, death does not appear as a terrifying end, but as one more transformation. Nor does it bring an end to experience, nor even to my participation in it. For everything I have done and been continues to exist as the context that frames all possibility, and that is what Being is, as we have seen - the framework of Becoming. The encounter with my own death and that with my belonging participation shatter a narrowly held sense of self on behalf of a richer experience of satisfactory belonging.

Primarily what we must understand is that such an ethic is an ethic of transformation and development. It urges us to act in a two pronged movement. One prong reaches out for an ever fuller experience of the actual situation; the second prong probes for a process to transform that situation in the direction of mutually fulfilling experience.

Thus a clear understanding of mutual self creation provides principles with which to evaluate the current situation and guidance for evaluating change.

Secondly, it must be emphasized that this is an ethic of communication. No one member of a community can dictate the becoming of that community. Only by sharing situations can we achieve contact with our shared situation. To act clearly, I must understand the actual situations of the other members of my larger situation. To exist in a participatory and non-dominating way I must be open to the other members of my context.

How is it possible to begin to enact such an ethic in the contemporary world?

CHAPTER II

POLITICS AND MUTUAL SELF CREATION

Having discovered some ethical guides inherent in the metaphor of mutual self creation, we are now ready to inquire how we might apply these guides to our actual existence. In this chapter I will touch on this inquiry with respect to our mutual co-existence in society.

It should be evident by now that such an inquiry cannot be separated from ethics or from spirituality. These divisions, adopted to ease presentation in this book, are wholly artificial and become ever more difficult to maintain as we proceed. If ethics is the art of right becoming, politics is the art of right becoming together. Since being and becoming are always predicates of a related whole, ethics is always politics and politics always ethics. How spirituality relates to this nexus will be explored in the next chapter.

It is part of what is that people influence one another. By virtue of our mutual self creation we perpetually participate in one another's becoming. We organize ourselves, consciously or unconsciously, and we enforce these patterns of organization on one another, through peer persuasion, through force, and through the plain expediency of having no options other than living in relation to consensual reality. "Politics" as I use the word simply refers to how we influence one another in regular patterns of interaction.

Every institution is a form of government. It is a pattern of regulated behavior and experience. In ongoing social context we organize one another, not only in behavior and activity, but also in experience. In fact, the organization of experience at deep structural levels is, as we will find, of the utmost political significance.

We have arrived at an understanding of freedom and of personal fulfillment as they appear within the metaphor of mutual self creation. The politics of mutual self creation are concerned with how we realize these values in our patterns of interaction. Political criticism is rooted in these values and seeks to understand and overcome barriers to freedom and personal fulfillment embedded in our institutions and habitual patterns of interaction.

Such criticism cannot concern itself strictly with "political institutions" or even with economic forms. Indeed, criticism must delve as deeply as possible into the politics of experience. That is to say, since ethics and personal fulfillment depend upon our increasing contact with our actual situations, we must understand the political significance of the patterns by which we keep ourselves and others from such experience and of the actions by which we can realize mutual self creation in experience. Criticism of institutions and social systems must be founded on criticism of experience; images of new institutions and social systems and of the means to attain them must be rooted in images of full and satisfactory experience.

In this chapter, I will first present a preliminary critique of the deep structures of Western culture as experiential construct. Then I will present some means for transforming experience toward those qualities that we have found to be at once profoundly ethical and deeply satisfying.

Toward a Critique of Western Culture as a Perceptual Construct

We have seen that our actual experience of the world, even including the perceptual world, is constructed in a process in which cultural and social factors are active. Both immediate primary socialization groups (such as the family) and broad groups of cultural similarity and identification (including even language groups) are significant factors in the basic structures of personal experience. These elements penetrate to the core of the experiential world. People from different cultures, as E. T. Hall says, "inhabit different sensory worlds."[1]

I believe that many pervasive problems in contemporary society arise from the structure of the shared consensual world and can only be addressed at that level.

Perhaps the one key theme that runs through criticisms of contemporary existence is alienation. Psychologists, novelists, politicians, social scientists and philosophers - everyone decries alienation. We hear of the alineation of the generations, of the races, of the species from nature, of individuals from parts of their personalities, of men from women, and so forth. There are even those who claim that the term is used so broadly and with such laxness that it may no longer be of any use at all.[2]

What is alienation? As it has been used in the literature it has all too many meanings. At the heart of the matter, though, alienation means the fact or feeling of being "alien" - of not belonging, of not being connected. Alienation is separation, felt or real.[3] Some dimensions of alienation are

> the estrangement from self, estrangement from others in a social or interpersonal sense, a sense of meaninglessness about one's existence, a sense of normlessness or the lack of any clear norm to follow, and, finally, a sense of powerlessness.[4]

There are those who object to such a wide use of the term. Joachim-Israel writes:

> I find it difficult to understand why one defines alienation as powerlessness, normlessness, meaninglessness, etc. Would it not be just as easy to use terms such as powerlessness, normlessness, etc.?[5]

Israel has a good point for anyone who is primarily concerned to discuss powerlessness, normlessness, and so on. Here, however, I wish to consider a fundamental similarity among such phenomena, a similarity I propose to call alienation and which consists in the experience of fundamental non-connection.[6]

In the process of learning "objectivity," we have developed the habit of isolating entities and even parts of entities as if they were really isolated from one another. This way of taking things has proved enormously powerful, but it is deeply flawed. The flaw is that, as we have seen, we actually exist in a dynamic of mutual self creation. As we found out in the ethics section above, it is in the interest of our own fullest and most satisfying experience for us to be aware of and in contact with that mutual self creation. A culture that teaches people to experience a world of ultimately separated entities inevitably damages its people and the context in which they live. This is exactly our situation.

Alienation is at root a lack of meaning. To feel alien from something is not to feel a sense of mutual significance between myself and that thing. This results from the absence of an embracing context in which I and the other find significant relationship. This is why it is possible, for instance, for us to poison our ecological context. We do not have the experiential sense of being interdependent biological

entities. We do not have the sensitivity to know that to kill the seas is to kill ourselves.

The cure for this situation is not merely more knowledge of a different kind. It is a radical change in viewpoint, a shift in the structures of consensual experience including our experience of ourselves.

Toward the end of his life, Gregory Bateson wrote:

> The most important task today is, perhaps, to learn to think (in a new way). Let me say that I don't know how to think that way. Intellectually, I can stand here and give you a reasoned exposition of this matter; but if I am cutting down a tree, I still think "Gregory Bateson" is cutting down the tree. I am cutting down the tree. "Myself" is to me still an excessively concrete object, different from the rest of what I have been calling my "mind."
>
> The step to realizing - to making habitual - the other way of thinking - so that one naturally thinks that way when one reaches out for a glass of water or cuts down a tree - that step is not an easy one.
>
> And, quite seriously, I suggest to you that we should trust no policy decisions which emanate from persons who do not yet have that habit.[7]

(NOTE: I take that to cover everyone I know who's making policy decisions! RC)

Similarly, in The Tao of Physics, Fritjof Capra comments:

> (We live in) a society which is still based on the mechanistic, fragmented, world-view, without seeing that science points beyond such a view, toward a oneness of the universe which includes not only our natural environment but also our fellow human beings. I believe that the world-view implied by modern physics is inconsistent with our present society, which does not reflect the harmonious interrelatedness we observe in nature. To achieve such a state of dynamic balance, a radically different social and economic structure will be needed: a cultural revolution in the true sense of the word. The survival of our whole civilization may depend on whether we can bring about such a change.[8]

Our culture teaches us to "exploit nature." We are challenged to "conquer outer space." Our economic system is based on competitive striving to maximize profit. Yet dominating a nexus of mutual self creation destroys it; maximizing single variables is toxic to the whole network. The implication is clear: our culture is based on formal structures inimical to the networks of relationships on which we rely to exist. One inevitable result of these mechanistic, fragmented, exploitive and dominating structures is increasing personal experience of alienation, distance and lack of meaning.

Problems emanating from the deep structures of our shared experience cannot be solved through action on more superficial levels. The ecological crisis cannot be resolved through more sophisticated engineering techniques. Only when we understand how to belong to the biosphere in a fitting way will the ecology again thrive. The crisis of sharing resources on a finite world cannot be overcome in an economy where one nation, or one group of people within a nation, struggle against others to maximize their own use of those resources. The pain of meaninglessness cannot be overcome in social relationships in which people try to control and dominate one another.

Ultimately, it is a question of individual and collective well-being. In his landmark book The Politics of Experience, R. D. Laing points out, "If the formation is itself off course, then the man who is really to get 'on course' must leave the formation."[9] Actually, if the "formation" - the collective construction of experience - is off course then the formation itself must be transformed. It is not only individual constructions of experience that may require therapy. Cultures our collective constructions of experience, can need therapy, too.

Today transformation of the formation is of the utmost political concern. The ethic of domination, competition and maximization has arrived at its crisis point. Ecologically the earth is endangered. Economically the great mass of people are endangered. Psychologically and socially we are all at peril.

We must move toward a new form of experience: this is a political and ethical imperative. We must realize our existence in networks of mutual self creation. We cannot solve our problems within our current framework, for they are the problems of that frame. We must change the structure of our experience.

Again we find the relevance of the Abraham story I told in the introduction to this book. We do not now live in participatory experience. We cannot project accurately what solutions we would find, in such an experience, for our current problems for we can imagine only in terms of our current experience. We need a way to move, a process of transformation, that takes us in the direction we want to go. In the changing we will find new ways of asking questions and new methods for solving problems. Like Abraham, we have to recognize the necessity of change, to leave the old and familiar, and to strike out for the new. We can not know in advance what it will be like "when we get there." The image of mutual self creation does provide us with clues as to the direction of our movement. Indeed, when we examine current experience in the light of mutual self creation we discover a true politics of experience. Alienation is rooted in our very experience of time and space, and of the nature of personal existence.

Time and Space

We discovered in Book 1 Chapter II that the body and the world are a correlated unity, not a disjointed dichotomy. This fact leads to a profound reevaluation of the nature of time and space. As Merleau-Ponti demonstrated in his brilliant phenomenology of perception:

> I am not in space and time, nor do I conceive space and time; I belong to them, my body combines with them and includes them.[10]

Just as it is necessarily "here," the body necessarily exists "now"; it can never become "past." The same is, ipso facto, true of all of experience: it is always here and now. "Our body is not primarily in space: it is of it."[11]

Indeed, "objective" time and space are constructed out of a more fundamental experience of time and space which must precede them. Temporo-spatiality begins with the "here and now" of my body long before I can conceive of abstract time and space. My body is given to me, even as a child, as my very existence and as the medium of all my possibilities.

> The word "here" applied to my body does not refer to a determinate position in relation to other positions or to external co-ordinates, but the laying down of first co-ordinates, the anchoring of the active body in an object, the situation of the body in face of its tasks.[12]

"Here" is where I am. It is always with me, I "take it along with me" wherever I go. Original spatiality extends from my "here" in all directions. Indeed, directionality originates with my body. "In front and behind," left and right, up and down have meaning only in relation to my body. Even such relations as "on top of" and "underneath" are identical in abstract space, depending simply on my choice

of "origins " for the Cartesian co-ordinates. It is the orientation of my body that gives me "above and below."[13]

Just as I experience space by embodying it, so it is with time.

> Time in the widest sense, that is, the order of co-existences as well as that of successions, is a setting to which one can gain access and which one can understand only by occupying a situation in it . . . [14]

> I cannot conceive the world as a sum of things nor time as a sum of instantaneous "present moments," since each thing can offer itself in its full determinacy only if other things recede into the vagueness of the remote distance, and each present can take on its reality only by excluding the simultaneous presence of earlier and later presents . . . [15]

As we discovered in Book 1, "space" and "time" are names for the intrinsic openness of experience:

> It is . . . of the essence of the thing and of the world to present themselves as "open," to send us beyond their determinate manifestations, to promise us always "something else . . . [16]

From the standpoint of mutual self creation, the whole of the past is present in every moment, as the context of what is just now coming into being. A nexus of mutual self creation and its members transform flowingly and continuously, and each member at any moment is felt as an influence by every other member. Thus, for instance, the evolution of the human species is really present in my existence, and in yours. Time and history do not get left behind like debris flung out of a moving automobile. What is transforms, and the specific, concrete nexus of relationship that is <u>now</u> is a dynamic, interrelated whole changing into what is about to be.

In the transformation process entities and even whole types of entities come and go. Yet they continue to be reflected throughout the

network. Every species, for instance, that influenced the evolution of humanity is present today as the context for our form of being.

Similarly I myself am a part of existence for all time. Not, of course, as a self subsisting continuous entity, but as a real member of the being and becoming of all the entities of my network of relationship. As such my existence becomes an indelible part of what is. Experience is always open, but what is open is given to me. What is given to me is my context, my situation, my unique reflection of the whole. My existence in turn becomes context for other creatures and becomes part of the whole context flowing on beyond me. Thus I reflect the whole as a unique situation and that situation becomes reflected in the whole as it participates in a multitude of other unique situations.

In this context, the future is not "what is going to happen later on." Rather, the future is that great openness of experience into which the constant dynamism of mutual self creation endlessly flows. This future, like the past, is fully present. It is <u>now</u> that experience is open and transforming and flowing.

In mainstream culture, Time appears primarily as a mode of separation. Time flows by and is constantly annihilated in the Past. The Future is an opaque field that we seek to control through planning and engineering. Death is the End, the uncontrollable inevitability of the Future. We are separated from our ancestors and our descendants by the "time between us."

We can, however, experience Time as a mode of connection. We have seen that the Past is Present as the given context and that the Future is Present as the creative openness of experience. There is but one Time, in which there is flow from openness to context. What was

once possible becomes actual and enters the context of new possibility. In this flow, openness is not depleted or exhausted, but its specific horizons are constantly transformed. What happens changes the contours of what is possible. What is historically possible today, for instance, is different than what was historically possible in 1500 BC. The context has been changed through intervening events. But there is still an open field of historical possibility. What is possible in my life today is different than what was possible when I was six, but I still experience an open field of possibility.

> There is one single time . . . which can bring nothing into existence unless it has already laid that thing's foundations as present and eventual past . . .
> The past, therefore, <u>is</u> not past, nor the future future.[17]

Time is a Present whole of dynamic becoming, in which the Past forms the context of possibilities and the Future the open possibility of Presence. In Time we are connected with what has been which participates in our very coming into being and guides the course of our becoming. In time we are connected with what will be in whose very coming into being and becoming we particpate. Time is a network of mutual self creation, Time names the flowing wholeness of experience. We can experience time as a connection.

Much of the same is true of our experience of space. We tend to imagine space as some vast emptiness "in" which objects are placed. We believe there could be space with no things, but not things with no space. Space is a kind of absence, a kind of emptiness that holds objects apart, into which objects are placed, and some of which objects (including "my body") "occupy."

It is possible to have a different experience of space. Space connects material existents. Space is a mode of being connected. Space is a relationship. Indeed as we found at the end of Book 1, modern physics indicates that space/time energy and matter are aspects or versions of one another.

Space comes into being "along with" beings that are spatially related. "Space" is not a substance or a void; it is the actual relationship among "spatial" entities. The question "How big is space?" is the same as "How far apart are the farthest apart things?" If there is some limit to the size of the universe, after which things begin again to shrink toward the center, it will be because of the gravitational relationships of the mass of the universe, and not because the stars run into a wall at the edge of Space.

Within this experience, I do not find myself alien or separated from my environment. I find that I have very concrete and specific relationships with entities around me, very immediate spatial relationships. I am connected, not disconnected, in Space.

The "emptiness" or "void" quality of Space that has become its prime definition in Western experience is a genuine part of spatiality, but it does not characterize the whole. Just as Time is open to the Future, so Space is open to change. Space, just the way it is, is given, like the Past. The possibility for new spatial arrangements to arise is also given, as this "openness" of Space. This possibility is analogous to the Future in Temporality. In fact the given spatial arrangement does present the Past, and any changes will transform that arrangement in the Future.

Personal Identity

We discovered in the opening chapter that forming a concrete personal identity and existing as a part of a social context mutually imply one another. This was, in fact, the first example of mutual self creation.

Despite this fact, however, most of us do not feel a deep consonance between our individual "selves" and our society. Indeed, if we did feel such a consonance, "alienation" from society would be impossible. Our social mythology actually encourages us to feel that there is some inherent conflict between "being an individual" and "going along with the crowd."

Indeed the great ideological rift between "communism" and "capitalism" is over the relationship between individuals and the group. "Capitalism" claims that individuals, motivated by their own self-interest, regulated through market conditions of supply and demand, are the essential economic unit. They must not be interfered with except in unusual circumstances. "Communism," on the other hand, claims that a cooperative interaction of the whole in which the abilities and interest of each are considered together, motivated by concern for the whole, and not regulated by an "external government" is the essential economic unit, and narrowly conceived self-interest must not be allowed to run amuck in it. Both models maximize one variable to the detriment of the other. Each is based on a fundamentally untenable assumption about the relationship between individuality and society.

We are entangled, in this worldwide propaganda war, in our deep alienation from the true interpenetration of individuality and collect-

ivity. We have seen above that in any complex interactive system, maximizing a single variable disupts the system. Maximization of profit in the economy is but one example of the way in which the West violates this principle. At the same time, subjugation of individual creative impulse and personal satisfaction that is apparently part of the worldwide "communist" network robs the whole of its creative potentials and separates individuals from fulfilling experience. Once more the network is set against itself.

Clearly neither of these approaches will ever work. The first frees individuals who have the strength, luck or background to have stunning success and wide ranging creativity; it also allows their narrow understanding of self-interest to dominate the political and economic system and ensures that there will be losers as well as winners. The second ensures a degree of social security and quality at the price of genuine individual experience.

There is value in each person having and being in touch with her own unique existence, for each of us has a unique insight into our whole shared situation. A person achieves satisfaction of her global experience as she becomes more in touch with her actual situation. At the same time, she is able to offer her genuine creative gift to the whole, for that gift is the unique reflection of the total situation which exists for her alone.

There is also value in belonging, in the widest possible sense - belonging to a community, to humanity, to the world. To touch in to my actual situation is to become aware of my interpenetration with my context, becoming aware of my actual existence in community. The more widely I feel this belonging, the greater the chance that my global

experience is peaceful and satisfying to me. The more aware I am of my actual situation, the better I am able to successfully carry out my unique creative projects, to express my personal insight.

This social relationship, in which individuals and collectivities are not experienced as conflicting but supporting, has been widely explored in the performing arts in the last century in the relationship called "ensemble." In an ensemble relationship (here I speak from experience) fulfillment for one member contributes to the fulfillment of each member and to the fulfillment of the group as a whole. In a theater ensemble, for instance, the play is built up out of playing together - out of the interaction of the members of the play in the various scenes. For one actor to have outstanding success he must play with his fellows very deeply, and this quality of play spills over into their performance as well. In theater, as in life, the roles we play form contexts for each other; they make sense only in relation to one another. For one role to be played well strengthens the context for the others.

There is, of course, another kind of theater, in which each actor plays solely for his own impact on the audience. He is not particularly concerned with his function as context, and he is willing to make his fellows look bad in order to look good. This actor is not concerned with the play - he is not concerned with the whole, but only with his part. That actor may dominate the stage, but he will destroy the tissue of the theater he performs and accomplish little of lasting worth.

The ensemble relationship, in which individuals experience their own success in terms that are consonant with the fulfillment of others, is possible. This possibility is rooted in the body/world unity we have

been exploring. It rests on our ability to loosen our sense of body as "the bag of flesh contained within the skin." Just as Bateson comments in the quotation above that his "sense of self" is too isolating, so too our habitual body image is inaccurate and misleading.

My body is experienced as a form, but this form is neither my body as it appears to others, nor is it any fixed objective shape. Careful attention reveals that my experienced body form is fluid and transforming.

> A woman may, without any calculation, keep a safe distance between the feather in her cap and things which might break it off. She feels where the feather is just as we feel where our hand is. If I am in the habit of driving a car, I enter a narrow opening and see that I can "get through" without comparing the width of the opening with that of the wings, just as I go through a doorway without checking the width of the doorway against that of my body. The hat and the car have ceased to be objects . . . (in the same way) a blindman's stick has ceased to be an object for him, and is no longer perceived for itself; its point has become an area of sensitivity, extending the scope and active radius of touch . . .[18]

When I type, I do not experience the typewriter keys as calculable distances in objective space, and I do not project the trajectory of my fingers through space towards them. I know where the keys are, in the same way that I know where my fingers are. I move my hands to the keys with the same confidence that I move them to my knees or my ears.[19]

Anyone who has played tennis or any court sport knows that the dimensions of the court become part of one's experienced body. I <u>know</u> where the outlines are on the tennis court, without looking at them. The experience of my body can even include the bodies of other people. Part of the mystery of love-making is that my immediately experienced body ceases to have its familiar outlines and opens onto and merges with another.

Anyone who has participated in team sports is aware of similar phenomena: the impossible blind pass in basketball or soccer to the person who is right there, even though out of sight, or the impossible shot-on-goal made by feel. These common "team" experiences are instances of ensemble. They present instances of being in touch with others in an expansive way, in which the "normal" boundaries of my self-identification expand to include my interrelationship with others around me. They are paradigmatic for ensemble experience in general.

Once I can loosen the boundaries of my self experience, I can discover that my identity includes and interacts with the whole of my field of experience. I can directly experience that my body and my world are not dichotomous, and that my self fulfillment is not intrinsically in conflict with the fulfillment of others. Both physically and psychologically this experience is opening and freeing. I discover that my centered creativity and individuality is not lessened in this inclusive expansion, but enhanced and developed. For this participatory interpenetration is in fact the case, and increasing experience of this fact is one aspect of increased freedom.

This doesn't mean that no conflicts or problems arise in a group. It does mean that people are able to frame our goals in terms that include our involvement in the total context. It means that people understand and incorporate into our ongoing doings the fact that damaging our context is damaging ourselves. It means realizing that the widest contact with the actual situation is best and resisting the urge to block the parts we don't like.

Summation

In this section I have presented the hypothesis that our socio-cultural perceptual structuring is a deep root of some profound political and economic problems. There is a theme of alienation running through modern culture at every level - alienation from nature, from society, from tradition, from government, alienation between the sexes, between the generations. This psychological and social alienation reflects a deep alienation in our direct experience and in our understanding of that experience.

We tend to experience and to believe in a universe of more or less independent objects. We tend to experience ourselves as more or less "free agents" and to rankle under the influence of our surroundings. We tend to live in a mechanistic world in which objects and people have external relations to one another. This is not the only structure that experience can have, and it does not seem to fit the facts, either as they are presented by our meditations in Book 1 nor as understood by contemporary physical science.

I have briefly sketched possible alternate experiences in three significant dimensions of experience. The first two, time and space, are the context of physical being, while the third, personal identity, is the context of individual human being. I suggest that it is possible to experience structures of mutual self creation. In such an experience, time and space are found to be modes of connection and sources of creative openness, while personal identity is found to be a non-contradictory involvement of individual creativity and social situation.

Transformation of the Consensual World

Up to now, I have been dealing with formal questions of compatibility and involvement. When I say that individuality and collectivity do not contradict one another, I don't mean that groups do not oppress their members, or that individuals do not destroy groups of which they are part.

The political facts are all too clear. The Earth is in crisis: we are dominating the biosphere to its irreparable harm, we are poisoning the geo-chemistry that supports us, we have created the nuclear weapons for mass destruction and a context of rationalization for using them, we live in an era of diminishing personal experience of meaning, and so on and so forth. How can we act in this situation? What can we do?

The problem is not an easy one and I am not going to provide a systematic outline of global revolution. I will address, in a suggestive and not a dogmatic fashion, three things: A. Clarification of My Political Location in the World Situation, B. An Image of Cultural Revolution, C. Beginning to Make the Change.

A. Clarification of My Political Location in the World Situation

Once again it is necessary for me to affirm that what I say here is part of a conversation. I am a white American male, 31 years old, and I have life experiences and expectations rooted in those facts. I am sure the world seems very different to someone who lives in Lesotho, or in Guatemala, or in Kiev.

I do not intend to develop strategies for Lesotho, Guatemala, or Kiev. I am better equipped to talk about what we Americans and Western

Europeans can do. On the other hand, the issues of deepest concern do not change depending on where one lives. Fulfilled human experience is important in Leostho and in USA. The actual interpenetration of individuals and societies, and of members of ecosystems, goes on everywhere, though concrete manifestation differs everywhere.

For example, I am committed to peaceful action. Based on my understanding that there are no ends, there is nothing "outside" an action with which to justify that action. Yet I would never presume to tell someone fighting oppression that she should not fight. We have to look at whole networks and the sources of violence in them. Black revolutionaries in South Africa, for example, are not instigators of violence; they have been the victims of violence for generations. To support peace I should end the violence of my own country's involvement in their lives, not condemn their struggle for freedom. In a similar vein it is hard to find the Guatemalan peasant army to be the source of violence in Guatemala, when for decades great wealth has been taken from that land and not shared with its people, many of whom were forced to live in brutal poverty.

As we chart a path to address the deep causes of our turmoil, we cannot abandon the daily practice of politics, for that would be to ignore our actual current involvement on behalf of some theoretical involvement in the future. At the same time, the problems which now exist are in the nature of symptoms. They must be treated, but such treatment is far from sufficient; only when the roots are addressed will we be able to move toward true solutions.

Both Greogry Bateson, a social scientist, and Fritjof Capra, a physicist, were quoted above saying that a profound transformation of

consciousness and of social structure is imperative for survival. The facts that support this case are well known and need not be repeated here.[20] The discussion presented in this book suggests, in harmony with these facts, that continuing economic, natural and psychological exploitation based on contemporary beliefs about reality is ruinous. People who are not yet convinced, by their daily experience and by the brute facts, that a great change must be upon us are not likely to be convinced by any argument I can present.

It is, however, clear that contemporary Western theories about economics, politics, resource sharing, individuality, participation, and so on, do not now reflect mutual self creation as they are applied at the highest levels of business and politics. These theories are based on an idea of dominance and of maximization that is destructive to communities of mutual self creation.

We have every reason to believe, then, that contemporary economic and political activity is destructive to the biosphere, to local ecologies, and to the relationship between individuals and society. This destruction can be stopped only by changing our experience of the structure of reality, through a realization of mutual self creation.

Organizing life to grow toward realizing mutual self creation is a political imperative.

B. An Image of Cultural Revolution

Since we are ethically, politically and practically bound to transform our experience toward realization of mutual self creation, we must come to grips with the impact of the existing cultural context on us and with our ability to create countervailing forces in our experience. The fact of the matter is that every activity carried out in a culturally

dominated setting - be it shopping in a supermarket, driving on the freeway, or watching television - serves to reinforce learned experiential agreements. Only by creating other experiential options for ourselves can we instigate a process of transformation.[21]

What we are trying to instigate is a snowballing process of personal and interpersonal change. We have already found that it is impossible to envision the "end" of such a process, since we can only imagine in terms of the structure of our current experience. What we need to do now is to look for actions that lead in the true direction and take them. From these actions will come new insight, and from these insights will come new opportunities to act. The prerequisite is the commitment to change.

Security and fear

We must at the outset admit our inherent fear of such change. Our world, our experience, for all its faults, is familiar. We know our way around in it. I myself, for all my problems, am familiar to myself, I "know how to deal with myself." To enter into a process of deep change is to bid farewell to that security on behalf of fuller and more satisfying global experience. It requires faith in the creative process of which we are members, and it inevitably evokes a degree of fear.

It is commonplace that "sanity" is largely a matter of socio-cultural definition,[22] so a commitment to a world experience radically different from that which dominates is a commitment to be "insane."

But there is more to sanity than just being "well adjusted" to one's socio-cultural context. That context is itself nested within a more comprehensive context of a specific local ecology which is itself

in ever expanding networks of mutual self creation. Sanity is to be "well adjusted" to this comprehensive whole. Moreover, a cultural network must be judged by the global satisfactoriness of its members' experience. Socio-culture must "fit" with both human potential and ecological context. A culture which does not do so is itself "maladjusted." It threatens the quality of life of its members and the survival of its ecological situation.

Our own culture serves well as an example of both. It is more difficult to estimate the "quality of experience" of ancient cultures, but certainly more than once whole cultures have died or radically transformed because of ecological changes they have brought upon themselves. (See below.)

If the culture is insane, then to become truly sane we must escape from our learned cultural insanity.

The commitment to go crazy in a creative way is a scary one. To intend to experience the world differently from the dominant cultural environment is to accept a measure of fear. To intend to continue to "fit in" to the dominant culture is, however, a commitment to a much greater and more terrifying insanity. It is only if we block out our experience of prevalent alienation, of environmental degradation, of human poverty and suffering, that we can imaginge changing to be more fearful than standing still.

Nor is standing still possible, since mutual self creation is inherently dynamic. If we participate willingly in the changes, we can be part of guiding their course. If we stubbornly cling to the familiar, it will change anyway, but woe betide us all.

Time frame

Another emotional issue to grapple with is the time frame for such a dramatic change of experience. Surely we can expect that due to our own deep conditioning as children there is only a certain distance we can change our own world experience. The Industrial Revolution, one of the most complete and rapid cultural transformations in history, lasted surely 150 years in England and the US and has not yet ceased in many parts of the world. We are talking of a change as deep and far reaching and there is no reason to expect to achieve it within one human generation. We are talking about consciously entering into a process of change that must take several generations to effect at the level of the global organization of society.

At the same time, of course, there are many factors urging us toward such change. Hazel Henderson, the British economist, remarked in a talk I heard her give: (paraphrased)

> When you imagine the vast changes that must take place to save humanity and the world, it seems overwhelming. If you believe that people have to make these changes on our own initiative, it seems impossible. What you have to remember is that Skinner and the behaviorists are largely right: a human being in a closed environment receiving consistent conditioning can change behavior and beliefs quickly and thoroughly. The Earth is is the Skinner box, and the conditioning is just beginning.[23]

The question is not "Will there be great changes in human society and experience in the next three or four generations?" The question is what will these changes be, to what extent will we participate in them consciously, and will they serve fuller and deeper human experience?

Accepting this time-frame can be liberating. Since we cannot possibly "get there," we can free ourselves from crippling overconcern

with "results" and get on with the process. Abraham knew he was not responsible for finding the Promised Land but for leaving Haram and raising up descendants who would keep following their Guide.

In making the conscious choice to move away from the given culture, we must also make the choice to look for, to support, and to seek support from others who are doing the same. Only through some network of support can the acculturating effects of daily life be counteracted. In the long run, we are trying to found a viable culture in the midst of the existing one - an interwoven group of people capable of providing necessary goods and services to one another and of forming a supportive multi-generational social system.

A large number of groups have sprung up in the last twenty years; some of the more famous of these have been written about and this literature is provided in the bibliography.[24] Valuable as this information may be, the question is not one of following the models of others. Groups must band together as we are able to begin to effect changes in our lives. Nor should we be discouraged when total change isn't possible at once. What is important is to take steps.

What characteristics of these steps are suggested by mutual self creation? Certainly ecological appropriateness; economics of optima, not maxima; politics of participation; and social ensemble support a new experience of the world and are congruent with mutual self creation.

These four characteristics are roughly analogous to the five central themes of what has been called "voluntary simplicity." Duane Elgin and Arnold Mitchell, social scientists at the Stanford Research Institute, have investigated this phenomenon. They identify five themes underlying diverse manifestations of voluntary simplicity: material

simplicity, human scale, self determination, ecological awareness and personal growth.

> This way of life embraces frugality of consumption, a strong sense of environmental urgency, a desire to return to living and working environments which are of a more human scale, and an intention to realize our higher human potential - both psychological and spiritual - in community with others.[25]

In fact, these are not separate values, but an interrelated cluster of values that mutually imply one another. Neither are they values of self-abnegation. Although Elgin and Mitchell list "frugality" as one key to voluntary simplicity, they are quick to point out that voluntary simplicity "should not be equated with living in poverty"[26] and that it is basically a middle-class phenomenon at this time.[27] The point is to have and to use material in the service of personal fulfillment, rather than to seek material as an independent value. Let us briefly examine what the four characteristics I propose mean and how they relate to one another.

Ecological appropriateness

From all that has been said already it is obvious that we must fit into our biological community. The simple fact is that advanced technological culture is eating our home - everyone's home - the Earth. The statistics that support this claim are so omnipresent I will not present them in detail here. I will simply cite a few facts about topsoil.

> (In one crop season in the US (1974-74)) a total of 3.6 million hectares of land were shifted from idle cropland, grassland or woodland to active cultivation. Of this total, 1.6 million hectares had inadequate systems of erosion control As a result, on this land area alone, loss of soil by wind and water erosion, above that which would otherwise have occurred, equalled 55 million tons . . .[28]

What is so urgent about these facts is that, historically, "deterioration of agricultural soils has been the principal factor in the decline and disappearance of major civilizations in a number of world regions."[29] Some areas have been so badly damaged that the soil may never be returned to fertility.[30]

> Wind and water erosion together have ruined or seriously damaged an estimated 114 million hectares of land in the United States. About 20 million hectares of land once used for crop cultivation have been rendered useless and an additional 20 million are nearly so. An estimated 40 million hectares of cropland have lost at least one-half of the topsoil they originally had. Considering that there is a total in the United States of about 225 million hectares of land suitable for either regular or limited cultivation, the extent of erosion damage is considerable.[31]

Another interesting fact about a basic resource is that, in many parts of the United States, water consumption exceeds water replacement. That is, people are drinking up the ground water, much as we suck drinks out of a glass with a straw. As the water table declines, the water eventually runs out.[32]

In fact, we are the gluttons of the world. In 1973, the 5.6% of the world's population living in the United States consumed about 40% of the total world resources consumed![33] And a large portion of our population is proud of that fact. The "standard of living" is based, in large measure, on the per capita consumption of energy and resources. Walter Heller, Former Chairman of the U.S. President's Council of Economic Advisors, has said, "We need expansion to fulfill our nation's aspirations. . . . I cannot conceive a successful economy without growth."[34] As E. F. Schumacher comments:

> If the United States' economy cannot conceivably be successful without further rapid growth, and if that growth depends on being able to draw ever-increasing resources from the rest of the world, what about the other 94.4 per cent (of humanity)?[35]

In this consideration I have not even mentioned environmental degradations due to environmental pollution, to the reduction of species diversity, or to the deleterious effects of impoverished cultural environments of developing persons. Even without this information, it is plain that ecological belonging is connected with the next value to be discussed - sensible economic activity. So long as we believe that more consumption is better, so long as we lack the concept and experience of "enough," we will be unable to fit in. So long as we fail to fit in, we will continue to destroy our context until, eventually, it will fail to support us.

It is possible, however, for individuals and small collectives to begin to move our own lives closer to ecological wholeness. Clearly the general task requires large scale, system wide change. Such change, however, can be wrought in various ways. In fact, the analysis to date suggests that this eventual change must be predicated on transformations of experience initiated at local levels, since it requires insight based on new structures of experience. If some group of "eco-freaks" were to take over the government today, they would inevitably simply recreate global structures of domination in a new way. As Bateson says, only after the gestalt shift of perception to a new way has occurred can anyone be trusted to make sensible political decisions.

There is a great deal, however, that individuals and collectives can do to improve our own ecological impact. Some resource literature on concrete options is included in the bibliography.[36] A great deal of this is obvious: recycling, reusing, buying food that has not been processed (thereby consuming energy and losing food value), buying local fruits and vegetables in season and preserving them so that food does

not have to be shipped from far away, reducing energy consumption in all phases of daily life, reusing gray water, and so on. The issue is not really how to do it; the issue is the commitment to do it.

One great aid in developing this commitment is intimate contact with the actual ecology of the place in which you live. The more you know about what and who shares your living area with you, the more you are in direct contact with the mystery and wonder of ecological interpenetration, the more you directly experience its degradation, the easier it is to be motivated to take care.

In fact, transforming our experience from "space" as the empty, abstract "stuff" that is everywhere the same to the experience of "place" which is unique in every situation, is part of the general body transformation discussed at the beginning of this chapter. This theme will be picked up again in the next chapter on Spirituality. In point of fact, we do not live in space; we live in places. Space is empty equivalent volume; place is unique topography, unique biological community, unique weather patterns. As we contact the places in which we live and come to care for them as they uniquely are, we inevitably grow to understand the whole biological community inherent to that place and our own "place" within that community.

Ultimately, we must learn that the Earth is a place, and that we have a place on the Earth that is not one of objective domination, but one of participation and belonging. As Odom says in Fundamentals of Ecology:

> Technology alone cannot solve the population and pollution dilemma; moral, economic and legal constraints arising from full and complete public awareness that man (sic) and the landscape are a whole must also become effective.[37]

Economics

The economics of mutual self creation center around the concept "enough." This concept has a double-pronged significance. First of all, it signifies that there is enough for us all. We do not live in a world of scarcity, but of plenty. Secondly, it signifies that each of us, individually and collectively, can have enough. We do not need an ever expanding consumption of economic resources to develop an ever expanding experience of personal well-being. In fact, if the image presented in this book is valid, at the point at which consumption stops being participatory and becomes dominating, it becomes destructive to personal fulfillment and to the ecological whole.

At the current moment, the Earth generates more than enough to provide all of its inhabitants with sufficient food, energy and material for adequate nutrition, shelter and heating. Even with current wasteful practices and distribution of population, this will continue to be true for some time to come.[38] Moreover, the Earth is not providing nearly as much as it could to human consumption, nor is this due to the wild lands or ecological preserves still remaining. It is primarily due to underutilization of domesticated lands and to the degradation of agricultural land already noted.[39] There is certainly not enough to support everyone at the level of the American upper middle class. Even more certainly, there is not enough to give everyone an ever expanding amount of material resource. But we live in a world of abundance and plenty. No one needs to starve, to go naked in the rain, or to live in fear of the elements. The problem is one of distribution and allocation, not one of productive capacity.

The economic system in which we participate is based on maximization of profit and rooted in the idea that economic self-interest (represented by the profit motive) is the only effective human motivator. According to the popular view, represented in the quote from Professor Heller above, the larger our Gross National Product, the greater our share of world consumption, the faster our "growth," the better off we are. Every part of the discussion so far indicates that this is mistaken. Again we must emphasize that "maxima" are destructive to contextual networks. We must learn to seek "optima," not "maxima."

Here we arrive at the second prong of "enough." What is "enough" for me? What is the optimum economic situation for me, considered in terms of consumption, or gratification from consumption, of time and energy expended in economic pursuits, and of gratification from that time and energy? We must learn to turn toward our deep sense of the quality of experience to guide our life choices. I myself have found that time (the essence of life) is more precious to me than consumption.

In any case, it is clear that our current economic patterns are ruinous, if the image of mutual self creation holds water. We must learn to live well with less on behalf of the well-being of the whole upon which our own existence depends.

One goal might be to consume only so much as would allow each other person equal resource consumption give current levels of production, or perhaps to consume only so much as can be generated regularly over an indefinitely long term. The point is not the specific rule as the commitment that every part of the global community must get enough.

> The American Friends Service Committee, long a leader in exploring a way of life of creative simplicity, defines simple living as a "non-consumerist life-style based upon being and becoming, not having."[40]

This goal, to be in touch with "being and becoming," is entirely in line with the image of experience arising from mutual self creation, in which being and becoming are mutual predicates of one another. In such a universe, no entity can truly "have" another, since all participate in each.

> The Friends have identified four consumption criteria which evoke the essence of voluntary simplicity:
>
> Does what I own or buy promote activity, self-reliance and involvement, or does it induce passivity and dependence?
>
> Are my consumption patterns basically satisfying, or do I buy much that serves no real need? How tied is my present job and life-style to installment payments, maintenance and repair costs, and the expectations of others?
>
> Do I consider the impact of my consumption patterns on other people and on the earth?[41]

As Elgin and Mitchell quickly point out, the goal of material simplicity is:

> (to) be manifest in consumption styles that are less ascetic (of strictly enforced austerity) and more aesthetic (where each person will consider whether his or her level and pattern of consumption fits, with grace and integrity, into the practical art of daily living.[42]

What we are trying to find is an economics based on the notion of fitting rather than on the notion of dominating. We have discovered that the basic evolutionary principle is not competition but cooperation. We need to imbed this insight into economic activity. It is not competition, but cooperation, that can generate secure, wide-spread well being.

This involves a reinterpretation of the meaning of "security." In this culture, "security" seems to involve hoarding enough wealth to be able to "last out" times of hardship. Like the psychology of scarcity, this gives rise to all manner of fears. If I have a hoard, and if others

need to have hoards, then I must constantly protect mine. If I do not have my stash together, I must be constantly "on the prowl" for a method of stockpiling resource and economic power.

There is another image of security that involves sharing, cooperation. If I share wealth when I am wealthy, and if others share wealth when they are wealthy, then there is a perpetual flow of wealth throughout the system. If, in fact, there is enough on the Earth to support us all, then all that is necessary to provide universal perpetual security is to instigate a universal ethic of sharing. Security comes only from sharing with those in need when we are in plenty and receiving from those in plenty when we are in need. Every other form of security is open to erosion from inflation and liable to theft.

It is open to inflation because it must be stockpiled in some form. Once goods and resources have been transformed into money, they become subject to the vagaries of money. A day's food is always worth a day's sustenance, but the amount of money needed to purchase that food can vary widely. It is liable to theft because there will always be both those in actual need and those whose sense of security requires them to increase their own stockpile. Stockpiling inevitably creates schism and insecurity. Those who "have" must spend increasing time, resource and emotional energy protecting what they have. Defensive barriers are created that effectively disrupt communication and cooperation, while resentment and anger are fostered among those who have not. Thus hoarding destroys the preconditions for realizing mutual self creation.

The economics of mutual self creation are the economics of plenty (on a global scale), the economics of "enough" (on an individual scale) and the economics of sharing.

> (We can see) the world in a new light, namely, as a place where the things modern man (sic) continuously talks about and always fails to accomplish can actually be done. The generosity of the Earth allows us to feed all mankind; we know enough about ecology to keep the Earth a healthy place; there is enough room on the Earth and there are enough materials, so that everybody can have adequate shelter; we are quite competent enough to produce sufficient supplies of necessities so that no one need live in misery. . . . the economic problem . . . has been solved already: we know how to provide enough and do not require any violent, inhuman, aggressive technologies to do so. There is no economic problem . . . but there is a moral problem. . . . [43]

As with ecological belonging, economic transformation is not a task that can be accomplished from the top down. Only after many, many individuals and collectives through much experimentation arrive at suitable patterns of interaction can we hope for global change. At the same time, a good deal has already been discovered in various experiments around the globe.[44] A good deal is known about practical alternative economics, and a good deal can be done by any individual or group who wishes to withdraw from the mass economy and to begin to practice voluntary simplicity, to use appropriate technologies, and to create cooperative patterns of economic interaction. Some sources of information and some case studies of what has been done are included in Note 40 to this chapter. As with ecology, however, the primary issue is not "how to" but the will to.

> Everywhere people ask? "What can I actually do?" The answer is as simple as it is disconcerting: we can, each of us, work to put our own inner house in order.[45]

Political activity

Again what we are looking for is movement toward increased involvement and interaction. I propose the following principles based on the theory of mutual self creation.

1. Every person is entitled to a roughly equal role in determining her own existence. A minimum of coercive control is desirable.

2. Every institution or social interaction pattern in which people live over a period of time is a form of government. It is a context in which people set and enforce limits and patterns in each other's behavior. Therefore all institutions must be judged in relation to 1. above.

3. Every institution or social context in which people live is, above all, a situation in which people live. Since the global quality of our lives is most important to us, institutions must be measured in terms of the quality of life lived within them, and in terms of their contribution to the overall quality of shared global experience.[46]

Based on these principles, we must change those institutions we can and found new ones when necessary. Institutions are simply ways in which people do things together, and they are open to change. Institutions are energized by people's participation in them; when people no longer "do" them, institutions no longer exist. The problem then is to withdraw from structures of domination and to participate in or create structures of cooperation.

This is not something one can do "once and for all" any more than are actions in ecology and economics. The whole world is shot through with domination like the veins of color in a block of marble. But we can begin to apply these simple principles in our own daily lives, to confront the massive institutions of our society with clearly articulated demands for change, and to build new patterns of interaction based on a different experience of the deep structure of existence.

One very important step in this process is to recognize the forces of domination that exist in our own lives. If you feel that you cannot move to confront your institutions, or band together with your friends in new ones, why not? To some extent, the reasons will probably be personal and psychological - the change is too scary, my current situation is too comfortable, and so on. To some extent, though, the reasons will be concrete and practical - if I push too hard I'll lose my job, I can't find an outfit organized like that to work for, I can't find any body "clean" to invest my savings with, and so on. These facts are the signs of forces dominating your own existence, forces you did not choose or legitimate, and to which you need not utterly submit. Simply being aware that they are there is the first step. One usually rankles so much at the realization that second and third steps present themselves. As I have stressed before, we do not lack resources for change; we lack the will to change.

Social interaction

Throughout this book I have stressed the connections between social interaction and personal experience of the world. If my experience of the world is to change, so must my social interaction. In my daily life, at work, on the freeway, at the supermarket, I am bombarded by socializing influences. Only by creating a social context to support an alternate reality can I provide the social mechanism necessary to counteract these forces.

As Berger and Luckmann remark in Social Construction of Reality:

> To have a conversion experience is nothing much. The real thing is to be able to keep on taking it seriously; to retain a sense of its plausibility. This is where the religious community comes in.[47]

Toward the end of Social Construction, Berger and Luckmann note that:

> Everything that has been said so far on socialization implies the possibility that subjective reality can be transformed.[48]

In their further conversations about reality alternation, Berger and Luckmann consider the case in which changes comes from outside, as in brainwashing and the like. Much of what they have to say applies just as much to intentional change.

Three central points stand out:

1. there must be an interacting group that supports the alternate reality,[49]

2. there must be legitimating beliefs that support not only the alternate reality but also the process of change leading to it,[50]

3. "the most important vehicle of reality maintenance is conversation,"[51] "alternation thus involves a reorganization of the conversational apparatus."[52]

It is tremendously important to be able to reinforce one's developing transformation away from consensual reality within another consensual experience. We need to change together.

The bias of our culture is toward separation, individualism, domination and non-participation. It is useful for us to band together into ensembles of all kinds. We need to move away from single families or individuals, in relative isolation from neighbors, toward a more open, communicative living situation. Group living is an excellent step toward personal resocialization and can be well worth the difficulty involved. After all, doing things differently is bound to be confusing and hard, but it can also be astoundingly powerful. Moreover, the economics of

sharing urge us toward group buying and use. Food, shelter, even energy is cheaper and more efficient when used by small and medium sized groups.

Primarily, though, living together creates a cauldron in which we can "change our conversational apparatus."

On the basis of all we have discovered about the role of language in forming perception, we can surely agree with Berger and Luckmann that changing our conversation involves changing our experience, including our experience of "what is real." Indeed, we found in Chapter II of Book 1 that fundamental rhythms are learned and habituated in the body in infancy through the mechanism called "synching." People learn our culture's rhythms in that way. Collective living is sufficiently unlike the sort of living most of us were raised in (mostly nuclear family) that we are "out of synch" trying to do it. This creates difficulties, but it also forces us and gives us the change to "get in synch" in a novel way.

This affects not only our language, but also our social role relations and our body habits. Living with a number of people not all of whom have familial relationships creates "unspecified roles." The role, for instance, of "parents' friends who share housing, bathrooms and kitchen facilities daily" is not yet clearly defined. People living together, some of whom are children, some of whom are parents, some adults not in traditional families, do not have cultural scripts to play out. We must improvise.

Of course, the improvisation can be effective or ineffective. The fact that living with people offers opportunities for creative transformation is no guarantee that it will take place. Those involved must be able to cope with the fears discussed in the opening of the chapter, and willing to accept the intense emotions that accompany social change.

Indeed, these developing systems may do well to use family therapists from time to time (although you have to make sure you get one whose values jibe with yours!). Change is a learning process.

Group living makes sense from other perspectives as well. In a sense, all apartment dwelling, even in duplexes, is simply group living with as much separation as possible! The alienation of neighbors from one another is one more manifestation of the pervading alienation of our culture. Realizing mutual self creation involves overcoming that alienation.

The need to overcome the structural alienation inherent in our cultural experience is an inevitable conclusion of the metaphor of mutual self creation. Social ethics and personal freedom unite with individual fulfillment in actual contact with the given situation. The given situation of human beings is that we intimately form one another's experience, and that we are impenetrably related with every part of our experience and with the whole.

E. T. Hall ends his most recent work with a call for us to come to grips with the influence of our culture on our experience, especially at the structural level.

> The task is far from simple, yet understanding ourselves and the world we have created - and which in turn creates us - is perhaps the single most important task facing mankind today.[53]

Global and local organization

The final question to be mentioned in this discussion is the relationship between local organization and global organization. When I think about world wide social organization from the standpoint of mutual self creation, I find myself at once needing local communities to be

responsible for their impact on the global whole and wanting those same communities to be as self-sufficient and self governing as possible.

In essence this is the question of the individual and the collective as well: how much power or control does the individual give over to the collective? The key to answering this question when it was asked above was realizing that the two terms are not inherently in conflict. Individuals and collectives imply one another and are not necessarily engaged in power struggles. Localities are also not essentially at odds with one another or with the whole. Indeed the health of the Earth as a whole is intimately important to all who live on it.

What the contemporary situation calls for is this: that we should at once become more aware of our global interdependence and more locally independent. Although it may seem that these are contradictories, they are not.

Human civilization is now an interactive global whole. We span the Earth with communication, transportation, conflict and pollution. Indeed Odom concludes that "pollution is now the most important limiting factor for (humanity)."[54] Pollution generated in one place may have its impact at another (as in the case of transported toxic chemicals) or it may spread from a center (like air pollution and water pollution that eventually affect a whole "airshed" or watershed), or it may be distributed throughout the system (like insecticides and PCB's in the food chain, or acid rain throughout the water cycle).

Economically, continued existence of developed industrialism clearly depends on continued access to worldwide supplies of resources. Given current distribution of industry and resource, this means regional interdependence of raw materials and made goods. The sudden disruption

of that interdependence for a prolonged time would destroy the economy of the world.

There is a clear necessity to begin to act on behalf of the global whole. If it fails, we all go with it. Any view of the actual connection in our current network of mutual self creation demands that we enforce action on behalf of the whole.

At the same time ecological considerations urge us to stronger independence. For example, during the winter months Californians can buy a wide variety of produce from New Zealand. This food has been moved halfway around the world to feed people who live in a huge vegetable garden! In an even worse situation, people in many third world countries work on plantations growing cash crops (such as sugar and coffee) in countries where there is not enough food! Subsistence farming may not be a way to join the world money economy, but it sure is a way to feed a family.

In terms of creative freedom, of course, it is desirable to be free of domination from outside. The more independent one is, the less open one is to domination. This applies to the United States in terms of energy - the less energy we need from outside, the less power other nations can have over us. (In this case, of course, we could become more free just by reducing our desires.) It also applies to individual households living within any country - the more that household provides its own necessities for energy and food, the less its members are susceptible to unwanted influence. (In this case too up to a certain point reducing wants increases freedom.)

As we have seen freedom involves awareness and acceptance of the actual situation. This is true for the freedom of groups and cities

and nations as well as of individuals. Independence does not mean non-relationship. Independence means realizing relationships of mutual self creation, and not entering into relationships of dependence and dominance that destroy it.

Psychologically we know that dependency can be a problem among grown adults. However, few psychologists would claim that adults should be (or could be) "utterly independent of one another" for our emotional, physical and spiritual needs. We recognize that people are indeed interdependent, and that affection, back rubs and good advice are an important part of life. In overcoming our neurotic dependency traits, we accept our true interdependence and also our individual independence and creativity.

In the same way, the balance we seek economically and ecologically must be rooted in "true" and not "imposed" interdependence. This is not so easy to discern and always involves specification of some time-frame. For instance, it is now true that sub-Saharan Africa does not produce enough food to feed its people. For now it is genuinely dependent on the rest of the world for food. In the short term this is unlikely to change, but over the longer term (several decades), there are strategies that can restore the soil and increase the food production of this region.[55] Certainly it is in the interest of people living in the sub-Sahara to provide food for themselves.

The United States' dependence on foreign sources of material is largely based on our patterns of consumption, and not on our intrinsic human needs. By the simple expedient of needing less, we can instantly achieve a great measure of independence.

Moreover, even our general level of services need not depend on such extensive use of resource. Prof. Richard Meier, School of Environ-

mental Design, University of California, has estimated that urban areas in moderate climates could "save more than 90% of the energy and water expended per capita in American and European cities but produce as much in the way of sustenance and human services."[56] In this particular design, rooftop space is used for aquaculture and wastewater is caught and used for farming. It is, as Meier notes, "a garden city."[57] In such a city, there would be a great deal of interdependence, perhaps more than in a modern city. But the city itself would depend on the outside for a great deal less.

The point of this is not xenophobic isolation. No doubt communication, travel and trade would remain highlights of the city's life, but disruption in them would be no catastrophe. At the same time, such a city would still depend on the near countryside for some items, and on even far distant places for others. Given the current world situation, planning for full human survival means global planning and global sharing at an unprecedented level. Learning to communicate and to plan as a whole world requires immense contact between people of all kinds at all levels of responsibility. None of this contradicts the need for local communities to strengthen their own independence.

Certain issues are of obvious global concern: the health of the seas, chemical and radiation poisoning of major environmental factors, world hunger, energy distribution, and the like. We must develop global organizations to deal with them. At the same time, we must find ways to depend less and less on external resources and on the given economy. We must look for concrete ways to create local economies that can support us with minimum reliance on factors beyond the control of the local economy. These economic resources allow us to strengthen

our countersocialization, and they form the first prototype steps toward new global economic systems.[58]

Summary

This rather sprawling chapter on Politics has spanned a broad territory. The central theme can be succinctly put, however: transforming the structures or experience is the most pressing political task before us.

In the first half of the chapter, we investigated the experience of time, of space, and of personal identity in contemporary culture and in the metaphor of mutual self creation. We found that alienation was inherent in our cultural experience of time and space, for they are given as modes of separation. Similarly we found that our given experience of personal identity tends to stress a dichotomy between fulfilled individuality and social participation and belonging.

In the second half I used the image of mutual self creation as a directional guide to discuss how and in what manner we might transform our experience away from this pervasive alienation. I suggested that there is a concatenation of values involving ecological belonging, economic sharing and political autonomy and interdependence in keeping with the sense of mutual self creation.

I should make it clear before I close that I do not look toward any "trouble free" culture or society. I am not looking for utopian life. I do believe that it is possible for us to organize our experience so that it is generally more satisfying than it is now. I should also make it clear that I am not advocating eschewing explicitly political action on behalf of cultural change. It seems to me that anyone who goes very deeply into any of the issues discussed in the second half

of this chapter will soon enough be embroiled in the nitty-gritty of politics. All I have warned against is the idea that there are "political" solutions to the profound problems we face: their ultimate solution lies in our lives, and can only be addressed in transformation and change.

CHAPTER III

MUTUAL SELF CREATION AND IMAGES OF SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

In this final chapter I will be considering the metaphor of self creation as an image of reality in relation to the spiritual traditions and particularly to the mystical traditions. At the outset I must admit that these terms do not allow of precise definition. It is not at all certain that people of different cultures mean the same thing by "spiritual," nor is it known if "mystics" have similar or different experiences across cultures.

Opinions differ. Some "mystics" seem to believe that all mystical experience is fundamentally the same.[1] Others are like Yasutani-Roshi (a Zen master) who grants that Yoga produces "enlightenment of one kind or another, but this enlightenment is necessarily different from Buddhist enlightenment."[2] I do not know the answer to this question, nor do I know of any way to find an answer except to get both kinds of enlightenment and then compare (a conclusion also reached by Fritz Staal in his Exploring Mysticism).[3]

I am inclined to the view that there is something in human experience that can be called spiritual, and certain kinds of experience that can be called mystical, and that they share a common core.

Spiritual Experience

Let me first make it clear that I have no interest at all in discussing the existence or non-existence of God or gods, in the sense of

asking whether anything "real" "lies behind" peoples' spiritual experience. The whole sense of experience which we gained in Book 1 mitigates against this. There is nothing that stands behind experience; for experience itself is the final arbiter and inclusive term.

What I mean by spiritual experience can only be defined in terms of its relationship to the felt global whole of my experience. Spiritual experience is experience that moves me toward a more fulfilled sense of satisfaction with my global experience. As we have seen, this includes moving toward fuller experience of my actual situation and of my interpenetrating involvement with the members of my community.

Spiritual experience may or may not include "supernatural" or "transcendent" beings; they are neither the hallmark nor the sign of spiritual experience. Rather, the significance of the experience of these beings is in its power to transform the global whole of our experience. The significance of Saul the Jew's experience on the road to Damascus is that he became Paul the Christian apostle. The significance of successfully undergoing the boy's (or girl's) puberty ritual (a six months' test) among the BaMbuti in Africa is becoming a man (or a woman).[4] The goals, the qualities and the results of what I call spiritual significance are meaning, significance, a sense of belonging to society and to the cosmos at large, peacefulness and reconciliation to the given situation and its creative possibilities.

A surprising number of theorists representing a remarkable number of disciplines and philosophical perspectives have arrived at a similar conclusion. Whatever they believe to be the "mechanism behind" people's spiritual experiences, there is widespread agreement that religious and spiritual phenomena have to do with the experience of meaning, significance

and belonging. In Anthropology names like Durkheim, Eliade, Levi-Strauss and Victor Turner, in Psychology Jung, Freud, Maslow, Assagioli, in Social Theory Berger, Luckmann, and Habermas, all these and more meet on this common ground. They agree that religion and spirituality exist in relation to the experience of meaning.[5] Of course, some of these people would claim that spiritual experience creates a false sense of meaning and belonging. We will examine this claim as we go along. For now, at least, all of them can agree that we should locate "spiritual experience" in the dimension of personal meaning and of my global satisfaction with experience.

Spiritual Experience and Religion

It is important to separate out at once "spiritual experience" from "religion." Religion is a social organization that receives its justification from its supposed relationship to the spiritual world. Like all social organizations, it partakes fully in the mutual interaction of social elements. A ritual in an African village, though assuredly intended to be a spiritual occasion, is also a political, an economic, and an emotional interaction. It is far from "purely spiritual," nor could there be such a social form.[6]

At the same time, there is no social form or occasion that is not touched by the spiritual dimension of experience. So long as I exist, my felt sense of meaningfulness and satisfaction matters to me. There is nowhere in my experience where this part of experience is irrelevant. If religion must always be political and economic, so economics and politics are always spiritual. Indeed, mutual self creation would lead us to expect such interpenetration.

We must then distinguish between religion and spirituality. Religion is a social form participating fully in the social nexus of mutual self creation. Spirituality is a dimension of experience relating to my felt sense of personal significance and to my global satisfaction with the quality of my experience.

"Spiritual experience" refers to moments of experience in which this dimension predominates. Particularly it relates to moments of enlightenment, when the world and the self change congruently in mutual deepening. Throughout this book I have used a child's perceptual development from two to three dimensional spaces as a paradigm for such experience. As we will see in the next section, the spiritual tradition is full of accounts of an unending sequence of such mutual deepenings.

Experiences of meaninglessness, alienation, absence of significance also belong to the spiritual dimension. Mutual self creation implies that these experiences reflect alienation from what is, for mutual self creation denotes a kind of belonging, a fundamental mutual cooperation and interpenetration. Contact with this belonging means contact with one's actual situation, with one's actual meaning; it means to be in touch with the source of one's creative individuality.

This, then, is the distinction between the divine and the demonic: the divine moves us toward ever more open and connected experience of mutuality and belonging, and therefore toward a sense of peacefulness and of creativity; the demonic moves us toward ever more disconnected experience of isolation and separation, and therefore toward a sense of dissatisfaction and of being blocked. The divine moves toward vibrant perceptual experience, satisfied sensual experience, interested mental experience and exhilirating spiritual experience. The demonic moves

toward duller perceptual experience, sensual craving that cannot be fulfilled, bored mental attitude and spiritual exhaustion. The demonic blocks or dulls what is. The fullest contact with and acceptance of my actual situation is also the fullest contact with my creative potentials, and fuller realization of my context is the goal of spiritual discipline.

Mysticism

As I pointed out above, there is a raging conflict over the use of the term mysticism. I will address this conflict in a moment. First, let me give my own intuitive sense of the term. "Mystics" are people who pursue (or, occasionally, are struck by) experience of the fundamental unity of experience. "Mysticism" has to do with experiencing this fundamental unity, with how to seek it, with its effects on one's life, and with its significance.

W. T. Stace, in the best philosophical treatment of mysticism to date, proposes seven characteristics of "mystical experience." These are unity (absence of subject/object), transcendence of time and space, paradoxicality, ineffibility, sense of the holy, joy and peace, a sense of profound reality.[7] I propose for a moment to discuss these characteristics in terms of mutual self creation. Then I will return to the question of the comparability of different mystical traditions.

Mysticism and Mutual Self Creation

Stace's seven characteristics are exactly what we would expect to find if mystical experience involves transformation toward realizing mutual self creation.

Reality

We have already seen in Book 1 that the experience of subject/object duality, of mind/body split, and of a radical separation between my body outlined by my skin and the rest of the world are mistaken. They exist in mutual self creation and can only exist and come into being in relation to one another. Fuller experience of that underlying fact would necessarily involve dissolution of our dichotomous experiential frame. This deepening of experience is as we have found of the utmost political, as well as spiritual, importance.

The proposition we are entertaining is that deepening toward realization of mutual self creation is coming into more profound contact with reality. Therefore we should not be surprised that in mystical experience there is a profound sense of heightened reality.

"Joy and peace"

Furthermore, we have found that increased contact with my situation is tantamount to increasing my sense of global satisfaction with my experience. "Joy" and "peace" refer to this quality of fulfilled belonging.

Transcending ordinary time and space

Just as the subject/object, mind/body dichotomies dissolve in experience of mutual self creation, so do the ordinary bonds of time and space. We have discovered that time and space can be experienced as modes of relationship, connecting me with everything. We have found that time can be understood so that the whole actual past and the horizon of future possibility are actually present in each moment. Increased realization of mutual self creation implies increased experience of spatio-temporal connection and increased experience of the actual concrete openness and inexhaustibility of time and space.

Ineffability and paradoxicality

As for "ineffability" and "paradoxicality" they pertain not so much to the experience itself as to difficulties involved in symbolizing and expressing the significance of mystical experience. These difficulties pertain, in large measure, to all experience. As I noted near the beginning of the book, all experience is ineffable, and no word ever fully captures its intended meaning. Spiritual experience is not exempt from this fact. Our increased sense of reality in spiritual experience heightens our awareness of the limits of language. We have also again and again run into the difficulty of communicating between global experiences with different root structures. Whether we imagine explaining three dimensional space to a two dimensional child, or people from different cultures beginning conversation, or mystics talking to the rest of us, we are confronted with the problem. How can we communicate not simply about elements within a shared context, but about a global shift of context?

Language, and even perception, are merely elements and expressions of experience, of the global relation of mutual self creation. They are not able to describe the whole of which they are parts. The more deeply we are in touch with the whole, the more we become of the distinction between the "maps" of language and the "territories" we seek to describe with them. We can point toward the territory, and we can indicate it, but we can never adequately describe it.[8]

Unity

That leaves us with Stace's final characteristic - unity. This is the one point practically everyone would agree on - mysticism involves experience of fundamental unity. Yet this is perhaps the most problem-

atic of the whole list, for it is not at all clear that mystics experience the same unity. In fact, there seem to be several sorts of mystic unity, ranging from experience of utter void and an experience of the interpenetrative mutuality of everything, from direct encounter with a personal God to the Buddhist realization of "nothing."[9]

I cannot possibly resolve this question here, but a few points are apropos. Mysticism must be measured by more than just descriptions of peak experience. Mystics, whatever their ilk, ordinarily continue to function in the daily world after their enlightenment. As the old Zen saying goes, "Before satori, chop wood, carry water. After satori, chop wood, carry water." To experience the void, or the white light, does not mean that in daily life perceptual reality becomes utterly void, or light. The lasting value of the experience lies in its transformation of everyday experience in the direction of the flowing unity of experience.[10] The goal is to dance with the universe.

We have learned in our investigation of mutual self creation that the universe is a unified whole which is utterly present at each location within it in every moment of time and which is infinitely and inexhaustively open and creative. The image of mutual self creation supports the mystical claim that the universe is one. If we accept the metaphor of mutual self creation, we can easily predict and explain Stace's point. It seems that the deep structure of our experience is mutual self creation. As we move toward realizing this structure, we move toward a deeper sense of reality, a new experience of space and time, disappearance of the subject/object dichotomy and experience of fundamental connection, and joy and peacefulness. We experience the ineffability of experience and begin to use what sound like paradoxes to describe our new experience to others who have not made the change.

We have established that there are structurally different worlds of human experience; there are many different "ways" of experiencing. I suggest that "mysticism" is a collection of ways of experiencing that resemble one another in terms of Stace's characteristics. Mystics claim to be personally familiar with radically different ways of experiencing. On the basis of this familiarity, they make assertions, one of which is that these ways are preferable to the ordinary ones.

Mystics claim that they have undergone (and that we may undergo) an experience in which their whole fields of experience have undergone a radical shift to a new experience of the self/world which must be characterized in a totally new way. Often a good deal of what they say and write is not about "reality" or "mystical experience" at all, but consists of instructions about how to obtain this experience for ourselves.[11]

Since mystics are talking about a global transformation of experience, there is no way for them to talk about the "object" of mystical experience. What is involved is not "an experience of something" but the transformation of whole fields of experience.

Moreover, in most traditions, there is no single "enlightenment," but rather a series or sequence of enlightenmens each leading to deeper contact with what is. For example, the Patanjali Yoga Sutras describe the "levels of samadhi," Harada-Roshi's commentary on Yadeo Swaseki's letters mentions "the stages of Zen," while Meister Eckhardt talks about the "six grades of the new man."[12]

We have found that the image of the universe as a community of mutual self creation provides metaphysical support for mystical claims. The universe is a single whole which is fully present everywhere. To

experience this unity is to experience more deeply than ordinary dual experience. Such contact with my full situation should put me in touch with my own creative potential, with the infinite openness of time and space, and with a fulfilled sense of global experience. Human beings are capable of living in various quite different ways of experiencing and can transform from one into another.

The mystical sense of being, which has appeared so paradoxical and unintelligible to Western philosophy, seems, when viewed in a universe of mutual self creation, to be rooted in deepening existential realization of the deep structure of experience. But simply having a clarifying theory does not make a statement true. Is there any evidence for the possibility of such experience or of the value of such experience for the felt quality of life?

How Much Can I Experience?

In Chapter II of Book 1 I discussed some evidence on Perception. The focus of that chapter was to demonstrate the thesis that Perception is a network of mutual self creation. During that chapter I concluded that both proprioception and external perception are active, dynamic constructs involving many individual, social and environmental factors. Personal awareness and the experience of one's own body cannot be radically separated, nor can "mind" be denied access to any aspect of "body." Likewise, the "body" and the "world" can no longer be understood as two distinct entities set over against one another in some way. They are absolutely interpenetrative and mutually responsive. Below I will review again some of that data, and some new data, with an eye toward the question of mystical experience.

De-Automization

A number of psychologists have developed a model of de-automization to explain mystical experience. This model is entirely in keeping with the discussion above. Their theory suggests that, during mystical experiences, the individual is no longer habituating, stereotyping and biasing the influx of information.

The model was presented by Arthur Diekmann in an article entitled "Deautomization and the Mystic Experience."[13] It is given its fullest treatment in Robert Ornstein and Claudio Naranjo's On The Psychology of Meditation.

> It is interesting (they say) to note the similarities between the esoteric and the modern psychologies of consciousness. Both stress that our awareness of the environment is a process of selection and categorization, that our sensory systems serve the purpose of discarding much of the information that reaches us, and that we finally construct our awareness from this heavily filtered input. . . .
>
> The meditation exercises can be seen as attempts to alter the selective and limited nature of our awareness, to change the habitual way in which we respond to the external world. In psychological terms it might involve a reduction in the efferent modification of input and in the "models" that we usually make of the external world.[14]

With respect to the question of "mystical experience" and "the effect of mystical experience" they arrive at the same conclusion as I have above. That is, in "the experience" itself, there seem to be two different sorts of unity that can be experienced, the unity of emptiness, or the void, and the experience of "being one with everything." The effect of both of these sort of experiences seems to be the same, a freshening and opening up of experience in the direction of full contact with experience.[15]

> (There are) two basic types of meditation exercises - both concerned with a common effect - those which "turn off" input processing for a period of time to achieve an after-effect of "opening-up" awareness, and those which consist in the active practice of "opening up" during the period of the exercises.[16]

There is some evidence to support this. In one study, an advanced practitioner of "void" meditation was tested while meditating, and while not meditating. When meditating, he displayed no registration of external stimuli within the sensitivity of the brain-wave machines. When he was not meditating, he showed no habituation response, but registered continously all the elements of his environment.[17] In another study, a group of Zen masters (who practice "opening up" meditation) also displayed no habituation response. When they were turned toward the perceptual world, both the Yogi and the Zen masters "did not seem therefore to make a 'model' of the repetitive stimulation and tune it out."[18]

Julian Silverman has studied perception in schizophrenics and in persons using LSD. He has concluded that the "undamped" quality of their perception, which is freed from ordinary screening, is what "binds behavior to the immediate here and now."[19]

Moreover, says Silverman, "The overall result (of undamped perception) is a radically different-than-normal way of experiencing one's self and one's environment."[20] This is so in large part because "The normally complete dichotomy of self from other depends entirely on the efficacy of distinguishing sensory cues."[21]

Brain wave studies indicate that master practitioners of both styles of meditation have radically different perceptual patterns than the rest of us, because they do not lose part of perception to habituation and automatic response. They assert that within this experience

the "normally complete dichotomy of self from other" does not apply. They offer us the possibility of a radically different than normal way of experiencing our selves and our environments. Again, it seems at least plausible that the claims made for meditation and mystical development are true.

Moreover, there is coming to be an enormous amount of evidence suggesting that we can experience a great deal that was once thought to be out of experience. Who knows what actual limits there are to our deepening awareness?

As we found in Book 1 Chapter II, recent studies show that people are capable of feats of self-control and physical awareness that until recently were considered legendary. There is practically nothing going on within a human body that the human cannot consciously learn to be aware of and to affect. There is practically no experience, emotion, sensation, thought or wish that does not have its impact on the physical body.

Recent discoveries indicate, too, that very subtle environmental influences have their effects on us. Interesting work has been done on the effects of light on premature infants[22] and on the biological differences betwen artificial light and sunlight.[23] "The strange ability of human beings to detect electromagnetic energy has captured the interest of physicists and electronics engineers all over the world."[24] Electromagnetic energy in the visual spectrum has been found in mammalian brains; and the ionization of the air affects ciliary action and healing.[25]

The jury is still out on this question, but current evidence indicates that we may indeed be able to be directly aware of our bodies and the universe much more completely and delicately than we currently are.

Evidence from Psychotherapy Supporting the Existence and Value of Mystical Experience

There is another source of evidence supporting mystical claims as I have laid them out above. In recent years a number of therapists have become convinced that the process of therapy is related to spiritual growth and that spiritual growth can be understood as bringing unconsciousness to consciousness. This is in keeping with the discussion of unconsciousness in Book 1 Chapter II. "The unconscious" is simply everything that I could be aware of but am not. Certainly deepening awareness toward realization of deep structures of experience is becoming aware-of what I was previously unconscious-of.

In The Healing Journey, Claudio Naranjo presents a wealth of case material to support his contention that:

> "psychotherapy" (rightly understood) and "mysticism" or "esotericism" (rightly understood) are but different stages in a single journey of the soul, different levels in continuous process of consciousness expansion, integration, self realization. The central issues of both are the same . . . some of these issues are, aside from the growth of consciousness, that of contact with reality, the resolution of conflicts into ever more incompassing wholes, the development of freedom and the capacity to surrender to life, the acceptance of experience, and, most particularly, a shift in identity leading from the enactment of a self concept to the identification with the real self or essence.[26]

Dr. Stanislaus Grof is a pioneer in the use of LSD for psychotherapeutic purposes. Grof's work is based on extensive clinical experience: he has personally conducted over twenty-five hundred LSD sessions at which he was present for five hours or more. He has access to records of an additional thirteen hundred sessions run by colleagues.[27] He draws the following conclusions:

1. There is a region of experience which people can reach through LSD therapy and in other ways which he calls "transpersonal" experiences and which he defines as:

> Experience involving an expansion or extension of consciousness beyond the usual ego boundaries and beyond the limitations of time and space.[28] (In other words, just what we would expect with a realization of mutual self creation!)

2. Significant portions of transpersonal experience seem congruent with descriptions of spiritual experience from a wide range of cultures and mystical philosophies.[29] Grof has recorded a remarkable number of distinct forms of transpersonal experience and correlated them with specific forms of spiritual experience.[30] In the current context, the most interesting are what he calls "consciousness of the universal mind," and "the supracosmic and metacosmic void."

Of the first, Grof says, "Identifying with the consciousness of the Universal Mind, the individual senses that he has experientially encompassed the totality of existence."[31] Of the Void he says:

> (It is experienced as) beyond time and space, beyond form or any experiential differentiation, and beyond polarities . . . causality . . . [32]

Here we see the same two versions of mystical experience that surfaced in Ornstein and Naranjo's discussion of meditation: the experience of the Void (of no stimulation) and the experience of encompassing and being one with the totality of concrete existence.

Grof notes that, experientially, "No matter how paradoxical it might seem, the Void and the Universal Mind are perceived as identical and freely interchangeable; they are two different aspects of the same phenomenon."[33]

Grof's work also supports the idea of progressive movement toward realization. He found that in a series of LSD sessions there was a set of consecutive shifts of focus:

> accompanied by corresponding changes of the personality structure, emotional sets, values, attitudes, belief systems, and often the entire world view.[34]

3. Despite the fact that Grof was working with difficult psychotherapeutic problems, the progressive course of experience generated through LSD therapy was effective in healing and transforming his patients. In the citation immediately above he notes the extent and thoroughness of personal change during LSD therapy. Individuals changed through a series of global transformations.

> Most of the patients had serious and fixated emotional disorders that lasted for many years and proved unusually unresponsive to a variety of conventional therapies.[35]

> The majority of the subjects in these sessions were patients with a wide variety of disorders such as severe psychoneuroses, psychosomatic diseases, borderline psychoses and various forms of schizophrenia, sexual deviation, alcoholism and narcotic drug addiction.[36]

> (Nonetheless) advanced LSD sessions are usually dominated by mystical and religious themes and are all transpersonal in nature; elements of the levels worked through in earlier sessions do not reappear in this stage . . .[37]

Certainly this work is only suggestive and not conclusive. It must be duplicated by other therapists before it can be fully substantiated. Naranjo's work lends credence to some of Grof's conclusions, as does the work of Roberto Assagioli and that of Abraham Maslow.

Spiritual Growth, Alienation and Integration

We live in a culture plagued by alienation, by the experience of disconnection and lack of meaning. Following the image of mutual self creation, we have arrived at a sense of spirituality as the progressive

deepening of experience toward ongoing realization of our existence in mutual self creation.

In a very literal sense I am the whole universe, all of time, all of space, all of being. The concrete shape of the openness of my experience reflects them all; I reflect them all. We have seen that there is evidence that this fact is available to us as an experience as well as a concept. Perhaps the progressive movement of experience toward mutual self creation is a progressive expansion of personal identity, a loosening of restrictive bonds defining "myself" as my ego and "my body" as the interior of the skin, two distinctions we have seen are utterly arbitrary.

This is the model that Ken Wilber, a young American philosopher, presents in his remarkable book The Spectrum of Consciousness. He argues that there are a sequence of dualities that can be overcome in a series of enlightenment experiences on the path toward full realization of mutual interpenetration. Each of these dualities marks a level on what Wilber calls the "spectrum" of consciousness.

Wilber suggests that these levels are caused by processes of dualism, repression and projection. That is to say, a fundamental unity is split by disidentification, the unity is repressed, the repressed elements reappear in the world as seemingly "separated" and alien identities.[38] The prototype for this is Freudian repression, in which I repress some aspect of myself (say hostility) and then I project it onto my world which I find hostile to me. Wilber proposes that this dynamic operates on many different levels. Essentially, each level is created by a further isolation of my sense of identity.

> Each level of the spectrum of consciousness is generated by a particular dualism-repression-projection, which results (among other things) in a progressive narrowing of identity from the universe to the organism to the psyche to parts of the psyche. . . . with each new level there appears more aspects of the universe with which the individual no longer identifies and which therefore seem alien and potentially threatening to him. For example, at the Existential Level, man imagines himself separated from and therefore potentially threatened by his own environment. At the Ego Level, man fancies that he is also alienated from his own body, and thus the environment as well as his own body seem possible threats to his existence. At the Shadow Level, man even appears divorced from parts of his own psyche - thus his environment, his body, and even his own mind can appear foreign and threatening. Each of these alienations, created by a particular dualism-repression-projection, is thus potentially productive of a specific . . . fragmentation . . . [39]

At each level, the purpose of therapy is to allow the person to reintegrate the alienated or repressed material of that level. Wilber sees a natural progression of re-identification, beginning with integration of the Shadow (or repressed aspects of psyche) and ending with realization of non-duality.[40]

Wilber correlates his images with a broad range of esoteric psychologies including Vedanta, Zen, Mahayana Buddhism, Tibetan Buddhism, and such Western spiritual teaching as Gurdjieff, Fisher and Benoit.[41] He also discusses his concepts in relation to modern physics, and his conclusions there are compatible with Capra's in The Tao of Physics.[42] (See Book 1 Summary and Conclusion.)

Wilber presents us with an image of experience progressively deepening toward realized non-dual experience, or of experience narrowing itself through progressive disidentifications and acts of alienation.

It seems that human experience is capable of progressive global transformation toward realizing mutual self creation. It also seems

that this experience offers healing for alienation and disconnection. Spiritual experience is not about some supernatural agents that may or may not exist "behind" the experiences in which they come to be known. Spiritual experience is about the healing of experience and the guidance of experience toward its fulfillment in full non-dual realization of mutual self creation.

"Localism" in Spiritual Development

There are, perhaps, some dangers involved in taking such a large theoretical overview of spiritual experience. In affirming the fundamental non-duality of all experience and the possibility of realizing that experience, I am not negating the fundamental experience of "other beings" or of their importance.

I am an interacting member of the total situation. As such, the total situation is involved in me, and I am one with the total situation. Your situation, however, is unique to mine, even though it encompasses and involves the same total situation. In the ongoing, "opened up" state of spiritual experience, non-duality does not mean loss of personal situation or a "blending out" of the actuality of other entities existing in other situations in relation to our own.

Krishnamurti says:

> One is used to looking at things fragmentarily, seeing the tree as something separate, the wife as separate, the office, the boss - everything in fragments. How can I see the world, of which I am a part, completely, totally, not in division? . . . There is only one answer to that; look at yourself . . . see things as they are . . . [43]
>
> When you give complete attention to looking at a tree, or a flower or a cloud, then there is no projection of your botanical knowledge, or your like or dislike, you just look - which does not

> mean that you identify with the tree, you cannot become the tree anyhow. If you look at your wife, husband or friend without any image, then the relationship is something entirely different; then . . . there is the possibility of love.[44]

This is what Krishnamurti calls "eliminating altogether the contradiction, the 'me' and the 'not-me.'"[45]

From Krishnamurti's experience, non-dual experience gives me an experience of the whole experience, yet I do not "identify with the tree" since "I can't become the tree anyway." This is in keeping both with the image of mutual self creation and with the evidence on meditation presented above.

The danger of reflecting on the universe in terms of its unity is to lose track of that contact with the specific entities around me which is my concrete experience and the ground of any unity I may experience. Theologically, at least, the great world religions are somewhat guilty of these practices.

Vine Deloria, Jr. is a Native American, a lawyer, educated also at a Christian seminary, who has written extensively on Native American religion. Truly a remarkable modern participant in two cultures, he believes that:

> The first and great difference between primitive religious thought and the world religions . . . is that primitive peoples maintain a sense of mystery through their bond with nature; the world religions sever the relationship and attempt to establish a new, more comprehensive one.[46]

Certainly that seems true of the literature of these religions, though practitioners and teachers often take positions closer to Deloria's own. Tarthang Tulku Rinpoche, a Master in Nyingma Buddhism, said in a class on Meditation, "I think the main problem is we are not enough in touch with our senses, we just don't attend to our perception."[47]

We need to learn to pay attention to what is actually in our current experience. This includes, as we have discovered, a quality of openness and creativity that we can well call, with Deloria, "mystery."

Every element of our community of mutual self creation has a unique situation with creative potential within our shared situation. Every person is given her situation and that givenness provides her with the gifts she has to share with the rest of us. This is fundamentally true of the non-human world as well. The specific individuals with whom we share our existence are fundamentally significant for us: they are concretely and directly our given situation. We must learn to communicate within our community. It is in this respect that I believe we have much to learn from tribal religion.

Although I draw on many literary sources, it is my contact with Vine Deloria, Jr., in class and in personal contact, that has formed my sense of Native American spirituality more than any other influence. Let me also admit that the term "Native American Spirituality" is a bastard concept. The peoples who lived in "America" before the European colonization had a wealth of religious traditions. Their cultural descendants likewise form no uniform mass of believers or practitioners. Nevertheless I believe that the religions of these peoples have some fundamental similarities which in fact ensure their differences. The chief among these is that the specific geographical and ecological context of the worshipping group is the primary locus of spiritual symbolism and of spiritual experience. Allied to this is a sense of direct relationship with individuals in the human and non-human realm. Given these two propensities, communities in diverse geographical and ecological situations are bound to have diverse spiritual symbolism.

Deloria suggests that this is rooted in the direct experience of "space" as "place" - as the embracing support and openness of, the specific contours and living creatures belonging to, right here where I am. He contrasts this with the "conceptual" sense of space as Euclidean or Newtonian coordinates arbitrarily imposed on an "origin" in an empty space.[48]

This religious sense, and how deeply it contrasts with our European system of thought, is pointed up in a famous U.S. Supreme Court case, revolving around the Taos Indians and Blue Lake. Native American spirituality takes root in the experience of place, and of sacred places.

Blue Lake is a site in the mountains near Taos, New Mexico which is sacred to the Taos Indians. When the lake was placed inside a national forest by Theodore Roosevelt, the tribe petitioned the government for the lake's return, explaining "that it was their major religious shrine and that the Pueblo would die without its sanctuary for the perpetuation of its religion."[49] When they were eventually offered money in compensation for the lake, they refused (eventually the lake was restored to them).[50]

The point here is the tribe's sense of the interpenetration of tribal identity and this particular spot. The tribe, the lake, and the other creatures who lived in and around the lake or who used the lake, form, for this group of people, an inseparable unity. To destroy that link would be to destroy the identity of the people.

In writing of the people who lived around San Francisco Bay only 200 years ago, Malcolm Margolin writes: "The Ohlones lived in a world they knew so intimately that even individual rocks, trees, and clumps of bushes had names."[51]

This is no different than the experience of some people even today. In his book Rolling Thunder, Doug Boyd reports that the Shoshone shaman said:

> plants live in families and have tribes and chiefs. When someone goes to gather herbs, he pays his respects to the chief by making an offering. Then he actually speaks to the plant, saying he is about to take a number of the group, but no more than is needed, and for good purpose.[52]

> Rolling Thunder describes it as "a two way communication."[53]

Boyd quotes Rolling Thunder to this effect:

> Man's inner nature is identical with the nature of the universe, and thus man learns about his (sic) own nature from nature herself. The technological and materialistic path of contemporary Western society is the most unnatural way of life man has ever tried. The people of this society are farthest removed from the trees, the birds, the insects, the animals, the growing plants and the weather. They are therefore the least in touch with their own inner nature. Unnatural things are so commonplace to the modern mind it is little wonder natural things seem strange and difficult to face.[54]

I can hardly pass on Rolling Thunder's ability to communicate with non-human beings, but the idea is not so far fetched. On a much more mundane level I have quite a bit of two way communication with both my dog and my cat.[55] It certainly is possible for members of different species to communicate. Mutual self creation suggests that deepening spiritual experience involves deepening contact with other entities and a more profound experience of relationship.

Vine Deloria characterizes tribal religious experience in this way:

> All species, all forms of life, have equal status before the presence of the universal power to which they are subject. The religious requirement for all life-forms is thus harmony, and this requirement

> holds for every species, ours included. Then (sic) natural world has a great bond that brings together all living entities, each species gaining an identity and meaning as it forms a part of the complex whole.[56]

It seems clear from any number of first hand accounts of Native American spiritual experience that it includes a dimension of contact and communication with individual members of the surrounding ecosystem, and receiving information and even power from them. Lame Deer, a Sioux shaman who toured with Bill Cody, speaks in his autobiography of medicine men who obtain their power from encoutners with different sorts of animals, usually during vision quest rituals.[57] "Our beliefs are rooted deep in our earth" he says.[58] Vine Deloria quotes Walking Buffalo, a Stoney Indian from Canada, about talking to trees.

> Trouble is, white people don't listen. They never learned to listen to the Indians, so I don't suppose they'll listen to other voices in nature. But I have learned a lot from trees . . .[59]

The point of this is not to idealize Native American experience into some new version of the "Noble Savage"; no doubt every culture has its strengths and its weaknesses. Nor can we in any sense "return" to tribal existence. The sheer number of people on the planet precludes it.

> Quite obviously we cannot return to the primitive form of religion that once dominated the world view of small tribal groups. The modern tendencies to discover a guru or medicine man as a spiritual teacher all collapse of their own inadequacies. Efforts of tribal peoples to retribalize and return to their original posture toward the world collapse in the face of an affluent technology that rips them apart. We live in a modern, electronic age in which blood sacrifices, ceremonies, and even kinship ties cannot withstand the future shock of a rapidly changing style of life.[60]

> We face the future immediately, and while we can be aware of the sound basis for primitive beliefs and customs, we can never return to them or take them up, expecting them to save us.[61]

What we can do is to begin again to take up careful, attentive relationship with the members of our experience, including but not limited to one another. We know full well that human beings can be predicted, when we are taken in sufficient numbers, but we also all know that knowing individual humans is one of the deepest and most fulfilling of all experiences. This is so of the other entities in our experience as well. The tree in the front yard is indeed "a palm tree," but it is also "just this palm tree" as my dog and cat are "just this dog and cat" and, indeed, as I am "just this human." The spiritual vision that arises from mutual self creation involves deepening contact with the concrete actuality of our surroundings. We are challenged to belong, to fit in coooperatively into our place in the community of life. We are called to our true situations, to our actual involvement with each other and with the other creatures of the earth.

Spiritual development consists in progressive deepening of experience toward realizing mutual self creation. This process involves a growing sense of global satisfaction with experience and an intensifying sense of belonging. This sense is concrete and specific, as well as global and general. It includes increasing contact with my actual surroundings and with the other creatures that I encounter as well as transformation of the structures of experience. Increasingly, I become able to pay attention to other entities in their true significance to me. As this happens, I can receive from these entities whatever gifts their unique situations provide to them. In this way we are able to share our gifts with each other and to develop an ever deepening sense of our shared situation.

Summary

The metaphor of mutual self creation provides us with a context with which to examine "spiritual experience." In particular, mutual self creation is itself a non-dual metaphor of experience. It presents us with an image of reality as a seamless web, not lacking in distinctions, but existing as an interpenetrative and participatory whole.

Mutual self creation directs us to experience itself for our understanding and evaluation of spirituality. There is nothing given to us outside of our experience. Therefore the question of what "lies behind" spiritual experience is meaningless, as is the question of what "lies behind" physical experience.

The significance of spirituality exists in relation to the felt quality of global experience. In fact, spirituality can be seen as the fulfillment of global experience. In particular we have seen that mutual self creation is compatible with the mystical traditions. Both present a non-dual image of the fundamental structure of experience. Both imply the desirability of directly experiencing in this non-dual mode. Both suggest that such experience is characterized by heightened reality, deeper personal satisfaction, and transcendance of ordinary space and time.

In effect, in the metaphor of mutual self creation, personal fulfillment, ethics, politics, and spirituality are conjoined in mutual self creation, for each rests on and implies contact with the actual situation. My actual freedom and creativity is congruent with and belongs to my situation; ethics is response ability to my actual interpenetration with other people and with the physical and natural

world; spirituality is increased experience of the mutual interpenetration of all elements of experience. Each implies the others. Each is, in a sense, an interpenetration of the others, since the fundamental definition of each is simply deeper contact with the actual form and content of experience.

One significant implication of mutual self creation is that the concrete specifics of my actual situation are important. We are called to belong concretely and specifically where we actually are. Thus our relations with the actual members of our current experience are of the utmost importance. Non-dual experience does not vitiate my concrete relationships, it enhances and intensifies them as I realize our mutual participation in one another and our creative potentials in and for one another.

In the experience of non-duality, "difference" does not disappear, only the illusion of "self sustaining independence."

> The Hua-hen declares that when we see through the illusion that separate things exist, we reach a level of experience wherein each "thing" . . . contains or is penetrated by all other things, an experience called hu-ju, "mutual interpenetration." Hence the universe is likened to a net of glittering gems, wherein each jewel contains the reflections of all other jewels, and its reflection in turn exists in all the other gems: "one in all, all in one," or "unity in diversity, diversity in unity." . . . "Mutual interaction" and "mutual dependence" are precisely the Hua-hen doctrine of mutual interpenetration, for to say that two variables or two things are mutually dependent is only to say that fundamentally they are inseparable, not-two, or non-dual, and that is mutual interpenetration. . . . (They are) "different" but not separable, expressing unity in diversity and diversity in unity, or what Eckhart called "fusion without confusion."[62]

There is evidence in psychology and neuropsychology that supports the mystical contention that the experience of fusion without confusion is possible and valuable in human life.

Finally in this conclusion I would like to mention some themes that were not raised in this chapter, but in earlier ones. Particularly I want to raise again the issue of death. We found in Chapter I of this book that an accepting encounter with death is a component of fulfilled present experience. We discovered that biological death is a creative invention of life. Our interpretation of time within mutual self creation shows that whatever we do belongs to being forever, as the context of becoming, and that becoming, as change and transformation, is of the essence of being. We found that the creative power that brought evolution itself into being continues in the universe at large, and that the future involves marvels of creativity beyond our ability to imagine or experience.

Above all, we have discovered that experience is inexhaustibly open. Time and space are great fields of openness, and I myself am an open field of experience, open because I can have endless new experiences and open because the structure of my whole experience too can be new.

Experience is mutual, interpenetrative presence. All of space and all of time are members of the form of presence. The past and future both are <u>now</u>; the flowing form of transforming time exists <u>now</u>. The givenness of context and situation form the limitless creative openness that is the self/world nexus.

> The world is inseparable from the subject, but from a subject which is nothing but a project of the world, and the subject is inseparable from the world, but from a world which it projects itself. . . . subject and object (are) two abstract "moments" of a unique structure which is <u>presence</u>.

Realizing this in actual, ongoing experience is the goal and the method of the spiritual path.

CONCLUSION

In this book I have pursued the theme of relations of mutual self creation. I characterised them as relationships in which the relations and the related entities are equally important, relationships whose members could neither be, nor have come into being, nor become apart from that relationship. Step by step we have found that the universe itself displays such relationships as its basic structure.

In Book 1 I established the following:

1. Networks of entities-in-relation do exist which display mutual self creation. Particularly, those between human individuation and human society and those among the members of evolving ecosystems are mutually self creative.

2. Perception results from and participates in a network of mutual self creation. The perceptual world is open to gestalt shifts in which the root structures undergo fundamental change. Some of these shifts have the character of "enlightenment" in which the self/world whole mutually deepens in an irreversible manner.

3. Experience is an inclusive term which denotes the structure of our existence. Everything that any person "has" in any fashion, as knowledge, as fantasy, as perception, or in any other way, belongs to that person's experience. There is nothing that lies behind or outside of experience of which we can have even the slightest notion; for us

there can be no such region as "outside" experience. Experience, grasped comprehensively, presents itself as a non-dual network of mutual self creation, one element of which is human creativity. This network has the form of dynamic co-presence: the past appears as the given context of creative presence, while the future appears as the open potential for creative presence.

4. Even the physical universe as revealed by modern Physics seems to display mutual self creation as its basic structure.

5. Each human person participates in networks of mutual self creation fundamentally. The extent to which we do not experience this marks the degree of our alienation from what is. On behalf of fulfilled and satisfactory experience, it is important to narrow this gap. In fact, recognizing one's actual situation, including its limitations and its creative potential, is inherently in one's best interest. This means realizing mutual self creation in ordinary experience.

In Book 2 I investigated the consequences flowing from an attempt to realize mutual self creation within the modern world. I discovered that the quest for ethical action, the search for political justice and freedom, and the growth of spiritual insight are inseparably interconnected and each amount to one thing: to live in increasing contact with our actual situation.

I found that, within the metaphor of mutual self creation:

1. There are no "ends," for becoming is part of being, and transformation is constantly part of the whole;

2. Freedom consists in being in touch with our actual potential for action while wisdom consists in choosing what it is possible to do;

3. Fully satisfying experience can be won only by accepting my own death. In fact, only by being willing to accept my death as possibly the proper outcome to a situation can I be free to experience the situation as it is;

4. The ethics of mutual self creation is an ethic of transformation and development. We are challenged to reach out for an ever fuller experience of the actual situation even as we probe for a process to transform that situation toward mutually fulfilling experience;

5. In the contemporary world this means establishing a critique of our culture as a set of structures of experience and transforming our patterns of living and working together based on this critique. Specifically, it means learning to live in a participating and belonging fashion with each other and with the Earth, rather than in a dominating and alienated fashion. Great human and ecological outcomes rest on our ability to make this transformation;

6. Mutual self creation directs us toward our experience for an understanding and evaluation of spirituality, for, as I discussed above, there is nothing "outside of" or "behind" experience. The metaphor of mutual self creation presents us with a non-dual sense of the universe compatible with the main tenets of the great mystical traditions. In particular, both hold out the desirability and the possibility of experiencing non-duality, and thereby attaining a deeper experience of reality and greater personal satisfaction. The spirituality of mutual self creation is one of belonging and participation, rooted in concrete relationships given here and now, centered in an actual place.

We exist as creatures in mutual self creation. At every level, fundamentally, we belong to interpenetrative networks of relationship.

The longing for truth, the quest for personal fulfillment, the search for political justice, and the path of spiritual enlightenment meet and join in progressive, existential realization of this fact.

AFTERWORD

NOTES ON PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION

It seems that for ethical, political and spirutal reasons our situation requires us to seek to transform our global experience. We have every reason to believe that such transformation can lead to more fulfilled individual experience. We have every reason to believe that without such transformation the next two or three centuries will bring immense human and ecological tragedy. But how can we proceed to effect such a transformation?

And what of those readers, who, upon reading a book like this, say, "It sounds plausible, but I haven't experienced it"? Are we to simply respond, "Well, it is true, and you should just act as if it is true, even though you don't experience it"?

To some extent that is just what we must answer, for we always guide ourselves toward goals we have not yet experienced. To some extent, though, there are practices and even courses of practice which aid in transforming personal experience.

We discovered in the main text that experience can never be fully symbolized, because whatever is used as a symbol is itself part of experience. One cannot "capture" non-duality by any means of duality. In response to this there have arisen three primary modes for talking about spirituality that include within them an awareness of their own limitation.

These are the analogical, the negative, and the injunctive. The analogical:

> Describes Reality in terms of what it is like. It uses positive and finite qualities that are so overpowering that they can effectively hint at or point to the Absolute.[1]

The second way is the via negativa, so common in mystical literature, in which all attributes are denied of Reality. For example, the Mandukya Upanishad describes Reality as:

> That which is not conscious of the subjective, nor that which is conscious of the objective, nor that which is conscious of both, nor that which is a mass all-conscious, nor simple consciousness, nor unconsciousness.[2]

The third way of speaking consists in a set of instructions, of experimental rules for finding out for oneself. In a sense this third way embodies the highest understanding of Truth as Truing, for it sees Truth in a course of development leading to deepening experience and contact.

> The Truth, insofar as it can be stated in words must always be a set of instructions . . . to experience Reality directly . . . notice that these three ways, the analogical, negative and injunctive, suggest respectively what Reality is like, what it is not, and what one can do to reach it. None say what it is . . .[3]

What follows in this afterword belongs to the third way. It is a collection of exercises, games, practices and ways of looking at things that I have found personally helpful. The main focus of these exercises is the developing transformation of baseline experience toward a direct experience of mutual self creation. I am not a guru and these exercises are not aimed at any final spiritual enlightenment. They are directed at that broad cultural process envisioned in Book 2 Chapter II, which is, obviously, a spiritual process as well.

The exercises are useful for people at all different stages of this work. Some of them may seem very simple to some readers, others may be incomprehensible to some readers. This is not a course or a linked sequence of exercises; I am simply sharing some resources and insights that have been and continue to be helpful to me.

Direction

An important lesson to be learned is that each person must direct her own development. Even when I place myself in the hands of a psychological or spiritual teacher to do work together, I still retain the responsibility and the ability to set my goals, to measure my progress in them, and ultimately to remain under or withdraw from the influence of this person.

Since personal felt satisfaction with global experience is the main guide, it should be clear that no one could possibly direct another's development. Each person and each local community must decide what the guides and signposts of growth are. I have suggested some of my own in the text of this work. Whatever they are, pay attention to them, follow them. They will help you evaluate the significance of the exercises I am suggesting and of any other course of action you undertake.

Particularly when an individual or a community seek professional assistance with this process of cultural transformation, it is important to make sure that the professional shares, or is at least willing to accept, that individual or community's own goals. For instance, there are many different sorts of psychotherapies and therapists available today. Some of them operate on a model according to which people are "sane" if they are "well adjusted" to their social situation. This

model, of course, does away with the possibility that sane people may transform and adjust their social situations! If a therapist or spiritual guide does not understand what you want to do, they will be of little use in helping you do it and may do harm.

Always, always the goal is an increasing awareness of my actual experience, increased contact with the global whole, and realization of my situation.

Language

We have seen that the language is a primary force in structuring experience. We can expect then that changing language would be an effective means for changing experience. Feminists and ethnic minorities have raised this issue persistently and with some effect. Anyone who has undertaken to develop inclusive (non-sexist) speech patterns knows how difficult it is.

I suggest undertaking the following changes in speech habits:

1. inclusivity;
2. reduction and replacement of visual metaphor;
3. change of locution from "people/they" to "people/we."

Inclusivity

This is a vibrant political issue. Inclusive language is language whose formal structure includes all segments of the population. The spearhead of inclusive language now is the feminist movement, which is pressing for a de-sexualization of generic pronouns and nouns used for the race as a whole. They contend, with some justice, that "man" as an image has certain male overtones that inevitably transfer when

the word is used to refer to "people." Similarly they contend that referring to divinity in male terms is a biased symbolism.

Inclusivity goes beyond feminism to incorporate issues of racism, of ageism, and of the bias of town vs. country and vice versa. In its broadest application inclusivity means fairness in our portrayal of the "political characteristics" of human values. If all the saints are white men, or if all "admired women" in history were housewives, or if everyone who is not Chinese is a barbarian, in each case the imagery is exclusive on the basis of an irrelevant factor.

A commitment to inclusive imagery is a commitment to include all sorts of people from our social context in our symbolism of value and in our symbolism of who we are as a community of people.

In this book I have tried to exercise my commitment to inclusive imagery. Particularly vexing in this regard is the problem of generic references in verbal language. I have chosen to alternate masculine and feminine pronouns to stand for "some person." Often I have said, "If a person does so and so, she will discover . . . ." For a plural generic equivalent to "man" I have used "humanity," "people," "the species" and "folks."

There are several ways to help change such language habits. Of course, in writing, there is always the opportunity to rewrite a text until the language is inclusive. In speaking, we are more reliant on gentle discipline from one another. We are more sensitive to each other's habits than to our own. Particularly, in this context, we are sensitive to other people's speech habits that exclude us, so that women, for instance, are much more attuned to sexist language (by and large). Once someone makes the commitment to inclusive language, they

can ask for and be open to having exclusivity pointed out as it happens, since part of habit-breaking is awareness of the habit. Of course, this reminding needs to be gentle and caring (especially once someone is committed to change!). Attacking someone for still having a habit she has just started to change is as counter-productive as salting the ocean.

"People/They"/"People/We"

This change of speech habit is really an extension of inclusivity, but it is so significant that it deserves specific mention. In our language, accepted proper form is to use third person pronouns to stand for generic human subjects. Thus we might say, "People, when they get very angry, can do irrational acts that they later regret." This way of speaking subtly implies that the speaker is not himself included in the statement. It places the speaker outside the universe he is speaking about: "they" do it, and "I" am not (by definition) one of "them."

In fact, of course, if something is true of "people" it is true of me. If "every person has her price" then I have my price. It is, I believe, extremely important to remember that when we talk about people we are talking about ourselves and not about someone else. This subtle tendency to place oneself outside the frame of reference is, of course, akin both to the old image of scientific objectivity and to alienation.[4]

Using "people" in the third person also allows us to avoid clarifying our situation and our meaning. "People are too apathetic" we say. Am I too apathetic? If not, who is? Obviously not "people" for I am one of them.

We live together here on this earth. In smaller communities we live together in more local "heres" all over the earth. I am one

of us; each I is one of us who live here together on the earth. "People," "humanity," "mankind" are not third person terms. They are names for us, for the first person plural, and we each participate in them. The proper pronouns are "we, us and our" not "they, them, their."

Reduction of Visual Metaphor

This is another metaphoric change that I have worked to apply in this text. It is extremely difficult to do. Our language is oriented in a very high degree to visual metaphor. This tendency is so strong that people habitually say things like "I'm going to go see a concert." Although, of course, one does see the players and conductor at a concert, surely the primary point is an auditory event!

Our metaphors for understanding are particularly dominated by the visual dimension. We have "insight," we get "visions" of the future, we try to "shed light on" various subjects. We "look into" problems. There are, of course, good reasons for visual metaphor in this dimension. But there is no need for such an overwhelming preponderance.

This is critical, because of the structure of sight. Vision is the most objectifying and distancing of all the senses. In seeing it is easiest to forget that sensing is a form of contact, and to lose oneself in the "over there-ness" of everything else. There is a tendency to think of oneself as an observer that is inherent in visual metaphor, for there is a sense in which I am detached from my visual field. Something can happen in my visual field that does not affect me; people and objects can move, can affect one another, and I can observe them relatively unscathed. Events that involve me more deeply usually involve my whole body and have a kinaesthetic, multi-sensory quality to them.

In his outstanding work Topophilia (a neologism meaning "love of place") the architect Yi-Fu Tuan writes:

> Responding to the world through sight differs from responding to it through the other senses in several important respects. For instance, seeing is "objective"; seeing - as the expression goes - is believing, but we tend to distrust information obtained through the ears; it is "hearsay" or "rumor." Seeing does not involve our emotions deeply. We can see through the window of an air-conditioned bus that the slum is ugly and undesirable, but how undesirable reaches us with pungent force only when we open the window and catch a whiff from the malodorous sewers. The person who just "sees" is an onlooker, a sightseer, someone not otherwise involved with the scene. The world perceived through the eyes is more abstract than known to us through the other senses. The eyes explore the visual field and abstract from it certain objects, points of focus, perspectives. But the taste of lemon, the texture of warm skin, and the sound of rustling leaves reach us as just these sensations. The visual field is far larger than the fields of the other senses. Distant objects can only be seen; hence we have the tendency to regard seen objects as "distant" - as not calling forth any strong emotional response - even though they may in point of fact be close to us.
>
> A human being perceives the world through all (the) senses simultaneously. The information potentially available . . . is immense. In (our) daily projects, however, only a small portion of (our) innate power to experience is called into use. What sense organ is given special exercise varies with the individual and his culture. In modern society (we come) to rely more on sight. Space for (us) is bounded and static, a frame or matrix for objects. Without objects and boundaries it might be filled with wind. Compare this attitude with that of the Aivilik Eskimo on Southampton Island. To the Eskimo, space is not pictorial or boxed in, but something always in flux, creating its own dimensions moment by moment.[5]

Tuan provides a discussion of each of the senses and their interpenetrations that is well worth reading. Here I will only point out the profound significance of touch. In effect, all senses are forms of touching, and touch is the primordial contact with the world.

> The fundamental nature of the sense of touch is brought home to us when we reflect that, without sight a person can still operate with a high degree of efficiency in the world, but without the tactual sense, it is doubtful that (one) can survive. We are always "in touch . . . Touch is . . . the direct experience of the world.[6]

The world is, actually, multi-sensory and synaesthetic all the time. Our conceptual metaphors for this world and for the ways in which we know it do not reflect this fact. Our immediate embodied experience also, too often, does not. Well acculturated bodies generally do not have a well integrated multisensory feel. Indeed, we are notoriously "out of touch" with our bodies. The same possibilities of practice exist for this as for inclusivity. When we are writing and presenting prepared pieces, we have the opportunity to rewrite them using a richer and more varied sensual vocabulary as the root of metaphor. In speaking, we can also consciously use non-visual metaphors, and we can gently remind one another of the absurdity of going to see a poetry reading and of looking into yoga. As we will discover below, it is also possible to support synaesthetic experience through architecture and the use of space and material.

Cross-Cultural Contact

This is a troublesome category that I have chosen to stick in with language for these reasons: Learning one's way around in a new culture is a great deal like learning a new language, and always involves learning a new spoken language and learning a new symbol system of social roles, "manners," and so on. Moreover, one of the first meaningful steps toward learning a culture is to become fluent in the language, and, indeed, that is a great step.

All cross cultural contact is valuable, and in one sense the farther apart the cultures are the more valuable the contact can be, to help us become aware of our own habitual structuring.

> The only time one is aware of the control system is when things don't follow the hidden program. This is most frequent in intercultural encounters. Therefore, the great gift that the members of the human race have for each other is not exotic experiences but an opportunity to achieve awareness of the structure of their own system, which can be accomplished only by interacting with others who do not share that system.[7]

> The rules governing behavior and structure of one's own cultural systen can be discovered only in a specific context or real-life situation.[8]

This sort of cultural disparity can exist among speakers of the same language. E. T. Hall notes significant cultural differences between "members of the opposite sex, different age groups, different ethnic groups, and different cultures,"[9] as providing opportunities for revealing one's own culture habits. But one must enter such contact with that in mind, and be sensitive to some of the difficulties involved in learning about deep personal habits (in some ways similar to some problems in therapy). Anthropologist Edward Hall's work is the best I know of for clear exposition of the nature of culture and helpful advice for research into and transformation of one's own culture, as well as some imperative reasons for doing so. His work is non-technical and easy to comprehend.[10]

My own sense is that contact with some cultures may be more valuable than with others. Partly it has to do simply with a sense of distance. For me to imbue myself with French culture would take a good deal less than to do so with Japanese. Partly it has to do with the particular characteristics we are looking for.

Hopi, for instance, is particularly interesting to me because of what I understand of the structure of the language. Apparently there are no original noun-forms, but all "names" are active verb forms.

> Some languages cannot say "wave;" they are closer to reality in this respect. Hopi say walalta, "plural waving occurs," and can call attention to one place in the waving just as we can. But, since actually a wave cannot exist by itself, the form that corresponds to our singular, wala, is not the equivalent of English "a wave," but means "a slosh occurrs," as when a vessel of liquid is suddenly jarred . . . [11]

I have already suggested that Native American culture has something to teach us, and perhaps other tribal cultures as well. Again I am not advocating any sort of return to tribalism, but I am suggesting that open contact with these cultures can be most helpful in our own desired development.

Some Meditations and Exercises

1. This exercise can be performed still or in motion. Become very aware of the outline of your body, of the contours of your skin. Once you can do this, experience the feeling, "My outline is the inline of the rest of the universe. This boundary does not belong to me, it is the space left to me by the universe." Advanced practitioners can practice this meditation in movement. One then gets the experience of "being moved by" the contextual whole.

2. Practice awareness of time and space as connection. Stop daily to remind yourself of your connection in space with the entities around you, pause to feel how yesterday has led to today and is still present in it. Group dancing and all kinds of ensemble work (see below) are excellent for developing this sense.

3. Lie or sit in a quiet and comfortable place. Close your eyes and concentrate on your whole body. Become aware of the world

coming into you through your senses. Relax in your passivity and allow your body outline to be clearly defined, and be passively sensing whatever comes in. Feel the world as it impinges on your body outline. After some time, shift your focus. Now notice how your attention goes out into the world and reaches ever outward into the world until it fades from contact in every sensory dimension. Become aware of your internal physical center and of the way that energy radiates from you to make contact with the world. Let your sense of body outline relax as much as it can without forcing. After some time, shift your focus back to passive reception and a clear body outline. Spend several periods in each state each time you practice this meditation. People who have practiced this meditation for a long time can learn to do it eyes open, which is very valuable.

4. Change your organization of time. Make time to experience your natural surroundings in unusual circumstances. For example, periodically I get up at dawn and spend an hour and a half watching the sun rise outside somewhere "natural" like a marina, or a hillside, or a park that is still in the city. Practice being still outdoors for long enough that you begin to have encounters with individual mammals, and birds and insects in your environment. This takes a great deal of patience, but it will prove rewarding. Become aware of treating other members of your environment as if they were important to you and as if they might be able to teach you something. Give yourself an opportunity to change by providing time for practicing new things.

5. Find out what is "enough" for you. This is part of the discipline of free time. So long as there is never enough, those of us who are economic earners can never be at peace. If I only work for

economic motivations until I have enough, I can free time to work and play for other motivations.

There is a commercial on television now that shows a man who comes home to dinner with his family for the first time in years because he has finally bought a computer for his business. Perhaps.

I have a friend who runs a small print shop in Palo Alto, California. He also has dinner with his family at night, but not because he has a computer. When his shop had grown to a certain size, Doug decided it was earning enough for him. He's tightening up his operation, raising his employee's wages, and planning to stay just about this size forever. He has enough, and that allows him to have free time.

This sense of "enough" is closely related to reduction of wants and to the socio-political practice of voluntary simplicity. It is, of course, possible to mutliply wants endlessly. When I have a car, I want two. If I have a chinchilla coat I can want mink. Therefore to achieve a sense of having "enough" there must be an end to the process of wanting "stuff."

Elemental Meditations

There are certain great cycles of energy and material in which we participate, particularly the cycles of respiration, of water and of food. Increasing awareness of these cycles can enhance the sense of belonging and contact.

"Food" is, of course, one of the primary ways in which life gives itself to life. Everything that lives feeds off life, for even the green plants, which use sunlight for energy, still require organic compounds in the soil. In fact, one of the most ancient prayers is a

prayer over food - "Food, thank you for being food. I too shall be food someday."

My body is made of the bodies of what I have eaten. My wastes go back into the food chain and provide nourishment for creatures which feed creatures that eventually feed me. Food is like a medium in which all life is dissolved. Atoms and molecules that are now part of my body may once have been part of someone in China, or Burma. What is now my body may become someone's body in Peru, or of a fish in the ocean. We share one another and the great "pool" of organic compounds and raw materials with one another in this food chain. We pass it on to one another, each of us using some other being, transforming it, and in turn being used ourselves.

Breath is likewise a great pool or medium in which we are dissolved and by means of which we are connected. Become aware of the substance you inhale and exhale. The air is a continuous pool surrounding the globe. Individuals in a single room can often become highly aware of sharing a single somewhat bounded pool of air, almost like a swimming pool.

Everything that lives participates in the great breath pool. Green plants both provide it with oxygen and breath in oxygen and carbon dioxide. Animals of course inhale oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide and other "wastes." There is a deep and delicate interdependence of plants and animals in maintaining the composition and quality of the breath pool.[12] The oxygen that becomes my body has been part of a plant body and of countless other bodies, of men and animals and plants throughout the ages. It passed through their bodies as it passes through mine, and long before I am dead (knock wood!) it will have passed through me and become part of some other being for a time.

Water, too, is a great medium in which all life is dissolved. Water flows through us daily as part of its ever moving cycle on the earth. Water evaporates, gathers in clouds, falls on the earth, runs downhill to the ocean. This water, cycling over all the globe, composes over 90% of the mass of life. Water flows within, and into and out of, everything that lives. The molecules of water that make up my protoplasm today, yesterday were clouds, and tomorrow will flow into the ocean; next year they will be part of a deer in Africa, or a plant in my back yard. Water is a vast medium, flowing through the atmosphere and across the surface and crust of the earth, flowing through and physically connecting life.

Developing the Experience of Ensemble

Taking the time to develop an experience of ensemble is worthwhile for any group that is forming around any purpose whatever. It is fundamentally useful for work groups and play groups as well as for living groups, a point not made strongly enough in the text. Expanding the extent of ensemble in one's own life is a powerful and very enjoyable way to change experience. As with any change, the transition from egocentric to ensemble experience may be somewhat difficult and may arouse fear, anxiety and anger. Usually, however, so long as these emotions are allowed to have their place in the transformation process, they are replaced by trust, cooperation and spontaneity. Also, ensemble interaction is generally enjoyable and creative, though no form of organization can abolish frustration, conflict or insoluble problems.

Having ensemble experience in any context is useful for creating it in other contexts. Once someone has made the transition to ensemble experience, it is much easier for that person to participate in other

ensembles without going through the sequences of emotional anxiety. I recommend, when possible, taking time aside with a group of people just to work on ensemble itself. Once the basic relationship has been achieved, it can be applied to any group process. Occasionally you may want to spend a day or a week-end together playing ensemble games again. Such "refreshers" are fun, and repeated practice at "pure" ensemble is always helpful. In fact, such recurring "times out" from the group's main work to play together as an ensemble resembles and has many of the benefits of community ritual as discussed below.

Even in the theater, where I learned about ensemble playing, it is necessary to set time apart to concentrate just on the ensemble. Even though good actors are well acquainted with ensemble, and even though the troupe of actors has been together over a period of time, it is always important to spend some time away from scripts and away from physical and emotional and vocal training. Only by providing separate time and safe space for practicing ensemble can you keep the relationship alive throughout the company's workings. Whenever people I have worked with have let this slack, we have gradually lost contact with the cooperative spontaneity that was the source of our creativity.

This is, perhaps, understandable, considering the socialization forces in our daily lives tending away from ensemble feeling. At any rate, I recommend taking time to play these games and others together soon, and often, and I highly recommend discovering your own methods and passing them along.

Many of these games and exercises require a leader who directs them "from outside." This person should be someone who has some experience of ensemble and who has the trust of the members of the group. Usually the leader cannot participate in the same way as the rest of

the group, although some exercises can include everyone. Ideally, an ensemble should form in relation to a leader who represents an "oral tradition" or a tradition of direct experience. However, there are some resources that any teacher or leader can use with practical results.

Moreover, effective "leaders" of ensemble processes lead in a manner that is itself harmonious with ensemble. Leaders can belong to the groups they lead, and ensembles can recognize and use their members' gifts for leadership. Leadership is not dominance, and authority is not power.[13] This question of leadership and ensemble, and of collective leadership, is extremely difficult and extremely important. It ranks with the question of sexual politics and the family as major practical social problems that must be solved in our lives and our children's lives. Certainly a theory of politics rooted in an image of mutual self creation would be helpful. I have been able only to sketch in the widest boundaries of such a theory in this book.

Resources for Ensemble Games

I will list below only those exercises that are not already available in the few excellent books that already exist. Here I will briefly review those books that are available and which I do recommend.

IMPROVISATION FOR THE THEATER by Viola Spolin. This is a complete course of games designed to develop what I can only call "disciplined spontaneity." It comes with complete instructions for a teacher and is organized into a sequence. It requires a minimum of seven players and can be completed in a year of twice weekly meetings. It can be done at a slower pace, and any exposure is valuable, even if only to the Orientation Series, which takes only a few days and can be part of a weekend workshop. As far as books go, this is the best of the lot. Although it is written

with an orientation to performing theatrical improvisation, the fundamental lessons it teaches about attention, relaxation, cooperation, spontaneous and unplanned problem solving, perception, and the like are vitally important in daily life. Any working group that learns to improvise playfully together will increase their productivity and their enjoyment many fold.

TOWARD A POOR THEATER by Jerzy Grotowski. Grotowski is the theatrical genius of post-war Poland. He developed a systematic actor training designed to remove all blocks to spontaneous expression of experience. Much of his work is a bit esoteric and technical for non-actors. However, the basic exercises presented on pp. 133-156 can be extremely useful in allowing people to develop an experience of themselves as a total, integrated physical, emotional and imaginative individual. When these exercises are performed by groups of people together over a period of time, surprising ensemble contact can be generated. Any group meeting for more than twenty sessions should begin to individualize the exercises in the manner suggested in the book. At this time pp. 156-204 may be of use.

Don't let yourself be put off by the fact that the book talks only to actors. The payoff is an integrated sense of yourself, physical ease, greater ability to express yourself effectively in all sorts of situations, and more playful and creative interaction with the world. Who needs to be an actor for that?

Some Games and Exercises

Animal transformations

Lie on your back and relax. At the leader's word, take the first image of an animal that comes into your mind. Relax and form a

very clear mental image of the animal. Examine it thoroughly in your mind. Discover how it looks, how it feels, how it sounds, what noises it makes, really get to know it. When you have finished that, very slowly let the animal's body fill up your own body. Imagine that your body is becoming the animal's body. Feel each part of your body, beginning with your feet and working up, imagining each part to feel like that animal. When you reach the top of your head, allow that animal to move your body, to get you off your back and into a posture belonging to the animal. For this time, everyone should ignore the others and be private. Begin to move through space like your animal, really concentrate on feeling the animal in your whole body. When everyone is well in touch with their animal body, the leader will instruct to begin to become aware of the other animals. People then begin to interact with one another. Further side coaching may be: explore the space; what sort of animals are your friends; who are your enemies; what do you want; and so forth.

When the group is interacting fairly freely as animals, leader side-coaches, "Now let your animals transform into people who are <u>like</u> those animals, whose bodies and personalities are like the animals." Allow them to change at their own pace, and then side coach interaction again. When interaction peters out or becomes over-verbal or over-active, side-coach them back into animals, then back to lying on the floor, and then back to simple relaxation. This exercise is also good when, rather than taking the first animal ot occur to you, people take the first member of the local ecology to occur. Then people may become both animals and plants.

<u>Child toy transforms</u>

The same exercise can be done, except using early childhood toys for the initial association, rather than animals. This is a more

advanced game, since people seem to find it easier to embody animals than toys.

Support exercises

1. For two

Begin with people in twos. Each person leans on each other (say, hands outstretched, palms touching) in such a way that they are balanced - neither of them has to hold the other up, but they are leaning, relaxed and balanced, against one another. The goal of the exercise is to move and explore this balance, to find as many ways as possible to preserve that balance in relation to one another. Neither person is to hold up the other, but there is to be constant movement, no talking, and relaxed balance. Advanced players also like to lean out and balance.

2. For three or more

The game is the same. Again the point is mutual support - the goal is for everyone to be giving their weight to a moving balance point, not for some to hold up others.

3. Trust circle

Where there is sufficient trust, form a circle with an individual in the center. The person in the center relaxes and falls outward, feet together. The person in the circle at the point toward which she is falling catches her (at about the shoulders) and begins to pass her around the circle. The person in the center keeps her feet together in one place, and the circle simply passes her from person to person while she relaxes and allows herself to be moved. It's a lovely kinaesthetic feeling. This can end either by putting the person down on the ground to rest as if she had had a massage, or she can be flown. To fly someone requires eight or so people of fairly even height. When the subject is

well relaxed, she is allowed to fall forward into two people's arms while two others catch her hips and two others her legs. The remaining couple help hold and elevate the trunk. As soon as she is controlled, she is lifted overhead and then the eight carriers walk gently around and, if they are secure, perhaps pass her body up and down and from side to side. The experience should be one of lightness and floating or flying.

Usually a group cannot fly everyone in one session. Over a period of time, everyone should get to try it.

Gestalt image transformations

The goal is to create literal or abstract group images for words provided by the leader made up of the bodies and voices of the ensemble. These words can range from abstracts like "red" or "freedom" to nouns like "eagle" or "ocean" to relations like "mother" or "lover." The point is to find a gestalt image that works without talking or planning. Side coaching includes "try another" and so forth.

Another goal is to keep in contact during transformation from image to image, instead of stopping, stepping back, and starting again for each work.

Group vocal meditation

Group lying down, usually with heads in to center of circle. Do basic relaxation and breath. Leader asks group to set up simple one note chant (mmmmm or aaahhh). When the note is well established, leader asks each person to become aware of his own voice as it forms part of the whole. Then instruct the group to allow the sound to change as it wants to. They are not to sing, but to meditate on the sound, to attend to the sound. They are to listen to their own voice as a part of the total

sound and to allow themselves to participate in the sound without judging their contribution. When the leader feels that the concentration has peaked and broken, she should side coach them to allow the meditation to come to an end. Advanced groups will "find the end" without instruction.

Voice/movement

Another exercise for couples or more. One or more person is voice, the others movement. Voice's role is to explore the pure sound possibilities of her own voice and her body (including slaps, etc.). Movement's role is to explore the pure movement possibilities of her body. Movement is to be in response to voice. The goal is to feel that the sound is actually motivating the movement, or even moving the body by changing the shape of the space around the body. After ten minutes or so, partners switch.

Another version of this is pure movement. Leader constructs a tape of sound and music (usually at least 45 minutes, up to 1-1/2 hours) that varies across a range of styles and tempi. Side coaching is to "move to the music." People are instructed not to dance, and leader must coach people who appear to be dancing either popular or classical "dance." The goal is to feel that the music is moving you, or, again, that the music is shaping the space around you and moving you. Only after people have achieved this to some degree should they begin to become aware of one another. Eventually spontaneously playful interaction will break out in full time and tempo to the music!

The six-steps exercise

People begin standing in a circle shoulder to shoulder in the center of the room facing outward. The whole journey outward is outlined by the leader before the exercise begins.

Each person is to take six steps to the edge of the room. On the first step you discard every simple object in the world except one. On the second step you discard every person and animal in the world except one. On the third step you discard every feeling except one. On the fourth step you discard your remaining thing and are left with only a person and a feeling. On the fifth step you discard the person. On the sixth you discard the feeling. At the sixth step leader side-coaches people to experience fully what it is like to be so purely alone. After some time, people are instructed to return to the center, picking up at each step what was dropped there, so that at the end of the sixth step inward you have regained the whole world. Participants are instructed not to leave the room until they have actually broken their isolation by actually sharing something with someone.

Resources for ensemble games

Fluegelman, Andrew, ed., The New Games Book (Garden City, NY: Dolphin Publishing, 1976)

Grotowsky, Jerzy, Toward a Poor Theatre (NY: Simon & Schuster, 1968)

Spolin, Viola, Improvisation for the Theater (Evanston, Ill: Northwestern University Press, 1963)

Drugs

Although there are some inherent dangers, it is also true that psychedelic drugs can be useful in developing alternate ways of experiencing. Gregory Bateson mentions briefly the role that LSD played in developing his own experience.[14] A number of important investigators into altered consciousness and related fields have had personal contact

with some form of psychoactive drug, beginning with Aldous Huxley and his experiments with Mescaline.[15] I have already cited case evidence from a growing use of psychoactive drugs in some therapeutic situations.

Speaking from my own experience, psychoactive drugs can be a positive factor in personal realization of mutual self creation. I cannot recommend self-dosing, nor can I recommend buying street drugs, since they may be severely contaminated and of unknown dosage. I can recommend guided experiences in relation to an experienced guide in somewhat controlled circumstances. Personally I believe the naturally occurring drugs, such as peyote (or purified mescaline) and mushrooms (or purified psylocibin) are preferable. I now avoid synthetic drugs such as LSD for intuitive reasons I cannot explain.

Some other new drugs are being developed by our new shaman-psychiatrists that may prove extremely useful. At this time, however, these individuals can only be contacted on a local and personal basis, and can only be trusted on the basis of personal knowledge. In this, as in many fields of interest, charlatans abound.

Community Life

I have already extolled the virtues of community life at length in Book 2 Chapter II, so I will not repeat myself here. Let me only say that some concrete movement toward greater participation and collectivity, a sort of local small scale democracy, seems to me to be fundamental to this whole process. There are countless models for doing this, and many of them allow people to maintain separate housing and the like. The important thing at this point is not to achieve some pre-established goal of total participation, but begin to move.

One very important part of shared life is celebration and ritual. This is another of those issues that must be solved practically in the next few generations. The ancient rituals no longer are possible, and the rituals of the great religions no longer seem to function effectively. Yet we need regular and repetitive events to bind us together in community, to help us make the great passages in our lives, to provide community support for spiritual experience, to break our ordinary time and force us to open our horizons.

Developing new, meaningful ritual forms for living communities is a prime task. Each community can go a long way to meeting its own needs, by finding meaningful group activities and regularizing their occurrence. Whether it is singing and praying together, meditation, ensemble games, story telling, dream sharing, agrarian festivals, dancing, or any other activity, what matters is the spirit and awareness with which it is undertaken.

Victor Turner's work in ritual is the most helpful I know of in guiding our development of the ritual process. In an accompanying note I provide a brief introduction to his work. There is, however, no substitute for first hand contact, and in keeping with the form of this Afterword, I will not develop this material which is available elsewhere.[16]

Another creative opportunity for communities is the reorganization of space and the creative use of materials to support a new sensual balance and a new structure for experience. Li-Fu Tuan's book Topophilia is a helpful resource in this matter. In particular, we may want to develop spaces that encourage synaesthetic experience and reduce our culturally induced overdependence on sight.

> The medieval cathedral fascinates (us) for various reasons, but one that has received little comment is this: the cathedral offers (us) an environment that stimulates the simultaneous use of three or four sense receptors. It has sometimes been said that the steel-and-glass skyscraper is the modern equivalent of the medieval cathedral. Actually, apart from the vertical bias the two buildings have very little in common. They do not illustrate the same principles of construction, they are not put to the same use, and their symbolic meanings are entirely different. Again, apart from verticality, the sensual and aesthetic experiences provided by these two structures are antipodal. The modern skyscraper caters largely to sight, though the varying types of floor covering provide changes in tactile stimuli. If there is sound, it is probably "musak" which is meant to be audible but not heard. By contrast, the experience of the interior of a cathedral involves sight, sound, touch, and smell. Every sense reinforces the other so that together they clarify the structure and substance of the entire building, revealing its essential character.[17]

Therapy And Spiritual Disciplines

Both psychotherapy and spiritual discipline can be effective tools in personal transformation. Indeed, both are designed to bring about such transformation. Nevertheless, it is not so simple as opening the phone book for a therapist or minister and going to town. Charlatans abound in both these professions, and an inept practitioner is much worse than none. Moreover, it is very important to make sure that the therapist's goals are in line with one's own. It is very important in these departments to keep one's wits about one at all times. Although therapy and spiritual discipleship require great trust, they do not call for abdication of personal choice.

The goal can be expressed in several ways: increased realization of involvement and relationship; increased felt satisfaction with global experience; increased perceptual awareness; a freer flow of personal

energy. It is important to make sure that a therapist is not trying to "adjust" you to society, and that a spiritual guide is not trying to "convert" you to some belief. Of course, it is best to be guided by someone in your own tradition of belief, but many of us today have no such tradition. There is much that we can learn from spiritual discipline without having to believe in a religion, just as one can do therapy without having to profess (or even understand) the theories of the therapist.

Therapy is especially useful when whole networks of relationship can be involved. The most usual form of such therapy in this country is marriage counselling, followed by "family therapy." There is also some industrial and group process therapy that is done, and some work in hospitals and other high stress working situations. I strongly suggest that people who are trying to form collectives open their process to counselling from a sympathetic individual outside the core group.[18] In a sense, the cultural transformation discussed in this book is a large scale group therapy.

Spiritual discipline can, as noted, be connected with specific religious beliefs and practices, but it need not be. Meditation, for instance, is primarily a technique for focusing attention and transforming experience. Specific metaphysical beliefs are not necessary, nor is submission to a "guru." Many forms of meditation exist, and most of them can be effective when practiced regularly. Perhaps the most important part of spiritual discipline is simply remembering to take time to be spiritually aware.

Yoga, too, is a discipline that can be learned apart from metaphysics. Yoga is good for stress reduction, deep relaxation, free and deep breathing, and total body awareness. All of these contribute

to increased perceptual awareness, greater self awareness, and a deeper sense of contentment. It just works, as do T'Ai Chi, Aikido, and other physical meditations. Some modern dance and jazz teachers also touch on these realms.

Other Sources of Spiritual Discipline

Foundation for Inner Peace, A Course in Miracles, 3 vols. (Farmingdale, NY: Coleman Graphics, 1975)

Puhl, Louis J., S. J., The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1951)

Tulku, Tarthang, Time, Space, and Knowledge (Emeryville, CA: Dharma Publishing, 1977)

FOOTNOTES

INTRODUCTION

[1]Herbert Marcuse, One Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), p. 257.

[2]See, for example, Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday and Co., 1967); Jurgen Habermas, Communication and the Evolution of Society, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979); Legitimation Crisis, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975); Herbert Marcuse, One Dimensional Man.

[3]Lao-tze, The Book of Tao, trans. Frank J. MacHovec (Mount Vernon, New York: The Peter Pauper Press, 1962), p. 5.

[4]Chuang-tze, Chuang-tze: The Basic Writings, trans. Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), p. 140.

FOOTNOTES

BOOK 1

Chapter I

[1]Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books/Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1967), p. 61.

[2]Lindzey Gardner, Psychology, 2nd Ed. (New York: Worth Publishers, 1977), p. 611.

[3]Melvin Lawrence Defleur, William V. D'Antonio, and Louis B. Defleur, Sociology: Man in Society (Glenview, Ill: Scott, Foresman & Co., 1971), p. 30.

[4]Ernest R. Hilgard, Richard L. Atkinson, and Rita L. Atkinson, Introduction to Psychology, 6th Ed. (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1975), p. 526 (the first page of Ch. 18 - "Social Psychology"):

> Social influences on behavior have been considered in earlier chapters. We saw, for example, how the child's development is affected by early experiences with other people and how personal motives are influenced by social interactions . . .

Joseph S. Hines and Wilbert E. Moore, The Study of Sociology: An Introduction (Glenview, Ill: Scott, Foresman & Co., 1968), p. 51. On p. 51 in his preliminary discussion of social organization, Hines differentiates groups according to the number of individuals they include.

David Krech, et al., Elements of Psychology: A Briefer Course (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970):

> Behavioral development during the early years reflects both physical maturation . . . and the cumulative effects of training, learning and general experience (p. 23, the first page of Unit 2).
>
> How the child has been reared in the home and the experiences he confronts in his outside environment have decided effects on the course of his personality

> development . . . we must include in the picture various social and cultural factors that, aside from affecting child-rearing practices, impinge directly on the individual throughout his lifetime. (p. 417, first page of Unit 25)

See also p. 166 on social learning and perception.

Ian Robertson, Sociology (New York: Worth Publishers, 1977):

> The sociologist is mainly interested in the interaction between people . . . the group, then, provides the sociologist's main frame of reference. (p. 5)
>
> A group is a collection of people interacting together in an orderly way on the basis of shared expectations about each other. (p. 139)

Jonathon H. Turner, Sociology: Studying the Human System (Santa Monica, CA: Goodyear Publishing Co., 1978):

> Sociology is the study of human social relationship. (p. 4)
>
> Sociologists do not focus on people, per se, but on the potentially complex relationships among positions and different social units in which people participate. But do sociologists lose sight of people? Certainly not, because sociologists are most interested in what happens to people in social units . . . (p. 5)

[5]For instance, during the evolution of the universe up until organic compounds first appeared, atoms existed and interacted according to atomic laws but organic molecules did not exist and the laws of organic chemistry were irrelevant. Similarly now on "dead" planets like the moon, or in very hot regions approaching stars, organic chemistry is irrelevant while atomic chemistry still pertains.

[6]John E. Pfeiffer, The Emergence of Man (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1969), p. 149, pp. 133-149.

[7]For some discussions on the impact of tools and language on human evolution, see: Jurgen Habermas, Communication and the Evolution of Society, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979), pp. 130-177; John E. Pfeiffer, Emergence of Man, pp. 72-92, pp. 133-149; Jay M. Savage, Evolution, 3d Edition (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1977), pp. 172-172; E. Peter Volpe, Understanding Evolution, 3d Edition (Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Co., Publishers, 1977), pp. 202-206.

[8]Eugene P. Odum, Fundamentals of Ecology, 3d Ed. (Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Co., 1971), pp. 435, 442-443, see also p. 207.

[9]Ibid., pp. 74-75.

[10]Ibid, pp. 33-35. For a discussion of homeostasis see Gregory Bateson, Steps To An Ecology of Mind (New York: Ballantine Books, 1972), pp. 315-319, 352-355.

[11]Odum, Fundamentals of Ecology, p. 8.

[12]Ibid., p. 10.

[13]Gregory Bateson, Mind and Nature: A Necessary Unity (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1979), p. 153.

[14]Savage, Evolution, pp. 97-98.

[15]For an example of this, see Bateson, Ecology of Mind, p. 124.

[16]Ibid., p. 335.

[17]Odum, Fundamentals of Ecology, p. 271.

[18]See Savage, Evolution, p. 4, for a brief summary of the story. His chart on p. 5 is also interesting.

[19]Ibid., pp. 189-190, 182.

[20]Odum, Fundamentals of Ecology, pp. 271-272.

[21]Ibid., p. 272.

[22]Ibid., p. 24.

[23]Ibid., p. 41.

[24]Ibid., pp. 98, 125.

[25]Ibid., p. 24.

[26]Ibid., p. 270.

[27]Savage, Evolution, p. 178.

[28]Odum, p. 23.

[29]Ibid., p. 29.

[30]Savage, Evolution, p. 63.

[31]Ibid., pp. 74-83, 96-100.

> . . . selection creates new adaptive relations between population and environment . . . constantly molding and modifying the gene pool. . . . Natural selection operates on every stage in the life history of an organism. It produces nonrandom differential reproduction of biological units and may affect any biotic entity from the molecular to the community level. Examples of levels at which natural selection makes differential discrimination are the following: intermolecule, intergene, interchromosome, intergamete, interindividual (Darwinian selection), interfamilial (kin selection), interdemic, interracial, interspecific, and intercommunity. (p. 78)

[32]Ibid., p. 98.

[33]Ibid.

[34]Volpe, Understanding Evolution, pp. 189-192. In fact, there is evidence to suggest that the structure of all but the very simplest cells results from the mutual accommodation and eventual unification of what were originally separate living cells. In the simplest cells (bacteria and blue-green algae) there is no nuclear membrane nor are there the specialized structures called "organelles" (e.g., mitochondria and chloroplasts). One provocative, though unproven, hypothesis is that the original organelles were free cells that were engulfed by other cells, originally for the purpose of being eaten. They resisted digestion, became functioning parts of their new "hosts," and eventually this new unit became self-reproducing. Both plant and animal cells contain mitochondria, while only plant cells contain chloroplasts:

> Just as aerobic bacterial cells can be equated with mitochondria, blue-green algae cells are basically equivalent to the chlorophyll-containing chloroplasts. Chloroplasts, like mitochondria, have their own unique DNA and the associated protein synthesizing machinery. We can now speculate that those predatory cells that engulfed but did not digest the aerobic bacterial cells became the eucayotic animal cells. Those predators that captured both the photosynthetic blue-green algal cells and aerobic bacteria evolved into eurocaryotic plant cells. (p. 183)

See pp. 182-184.

[35]Ibid, p. 202. See Savage, Evolution, pp. 172, 173.

[36]Savage, Evolution, p. 173.

[37]Volpe, Understanding Evolution, p. 203.

[38]Pfeiffer, Emergence of Man, p. 92.

[39]Ibid., p. 85.

[40]Ibid., p. 103.

[41]Ibid., p. 113.

[42]Ibid., pp. 112-128.

[43]Volpe, Understanding Evolution, p. 205. See also Savage, Evolution, p. 174.

[44]Pfeiffer, Emergence of Man, p. 133.

[45]Ibid, pp. 137-140.

[46]Ibid, p. 138.

[47]Ibid.

[48]Ibid., p. 139.

[49]Ibid., p. 140.

[50]Ibid, p. 141.

[51]Ibid.

[52]Savage, in Evolution, says:

> (The) broad correlations between brain size, bipedalism, tool manipulation, increasing consciousness, communication, and associated features suggest that the characteristics evolved more or less as a unit . . . (p. 171)
>
> As a matter of record, the principal progress in human evolution during the preceding 500,000 years has been in the development of a larger and more efficient brain, the expansion of tool production and design to extremely complex levels, the conscious awareness and control of the environment through the interaction of mental and technological activities correlated with, if not actually determined by, increasing complexity and innovation in play, ritual, language, and social organization. (p. 174)

[53]Bateson's work in Steps to An Ecology of Mind and Mind and Nature probably comes closest. However, he works with a cybernetic model that still tends to describe networks of relationship in terms of sequential causal chains. They can, indeed, be described in that way, but following them through in this fashion makes it difficult to grasp the significance of the simultaneously existing whole. This is quite useful to Bateson, who is able to incorporate the time dimension needed for an impulse to travel through a causal network into an elegant image of what he calls "form" and what he calls "process" (Mind and Nature, p. 209-224). However, in doing so, he falls back into a dichotomous model, whereas mutual self creation implies a non-dual reality.

This difference shows up in the discussion immediately below about "logical types." Bateson takes off from the fact that a class is not a member of itself, an important conceptual realization. (See Ecology of Mind, pp. 202, 279-308.) Bateson is able to use this realization to great advantage. However, as we will see below, a class and its members can exist in a relationship of mutual self creation, and this is also an important realization.

[54]Bateson, Ecology of Mind, pp. 202, 279-308; Mind and Nature, pp. 214-224.

[55]Berger and Luckmann, Social Construction of Reality, pp. 47-91.

> Human nature is a socio-cultural variable. In other words, there is no human nature in the sense of a biologically fixed substratum determining the variability of socio-cultural formations. There is only human nature in the sense of anthropological constants (for example, world-openness and plasticity of instinctual structure) that delimit and permit man's socio-cultural formations. But the specific shape into which this humanness is molded is determined by those sociocultural formations and is relative to their numerous variations. While it is possible to say that man (sic) has a nature, it is more significant to say that man constructs his own nature, or more simply, that man produces himself. (p. 48)

[56]See, for example, Habermas, Communication and Evolution of Society, p. 101; Berger and Luckmann, Social Construction of Reality, pp. 129-183.

FOOTNOTES

BOOK 1

Chapter II

[1]Maurice Merleau-Ponty, The Phenomenology of Perception, trans. Colin Smith (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1962).

[2]Ittelson and Kilpatrick, "Experiments in Perception," in The Nature of Human Consciousness, ed. Robert Ornstein (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman & Co., 1973), p. 180.

[3]Gregory Bateson, Mind and Nature, p. 40. See also pp. 34-40.

[4]Robert Ornstein and Claudio Naranjo, On The Psychology of Meditation (New York: The Viking Press, Inc., 1971), p. 188.

[5]Ulric Neisser, "The Processes of Vision," in The Nature of Human Consciousness, ed. Robert Ornstein (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman & Co., 1973), p. 203.

[6]Ibid., p. 210.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Ornstein and Naranjo, Psychology of Meditation, p. 187.

[9]Ibid., p. 172.

[10]Ibid.

[11]See for example, Wolfgang Kohler, Gestalt Psychology (New York: A Mentor Book published by the New American Library, 1947); Kohler, Dynamics in Psychology (New York: Washington Square Press, 1965); and Karl Koffka, Principles of Gestalt Psychology (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1935).

[12]Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology of Perception, p. 101.

[13]Ibid., pp. 67-203 passim.

[14]Ornstein and Naranjo, Psychology of Meditation, pp. 173-175.

[15]Ibid., p. 174.

[16]Ibid., p. 175.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Eleanor Gibson, Principles of Perceptual Learning and Development (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Educational Division, Meredith Corp., 1969), p. 119.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Ornstein and Naranjo, Psychology of Meditation, p. 173.

[21]Julian Silverman, "Perceptual and Neurophysiological Analogies of 'Experience' in Schizophrenics and LSD Reactions," in Exploring Madness: Experience, Theory, and Research, ed. James Fadiman and Donald Kewman (Monterey: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co., a division of Wadsworth Publishing, Inc., 1973), p. 164.

[22]See, for example, John A. Hostetler and Gertrude Enders Huntington, The Hutterites In North America, Case Studies in Cultural Anthropology Series (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967), pp. 18-16, pp. 57-67; Marshall D. Sahlins, "Land Use and the Extended Family in Meala, Fiji," in Environment and Cultural Behavior: Ecological Studies in Cultural Anthropology, ed. Andrew P. Vayda (Garden City, New York: The Natural History Press, 1969), pp. 395-415 passim; see also Edward T. Hall, The Hidden Dimension (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1959), pp. 133-163, and Hall, The Silent Language (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Publications, Inc., 1959), pp. 145-163.

[23]Ornstein and Naranjo, Psychology of Meditation, p. 178.

[24]For a discussion of this "tacit" body of learning and the structure of knowing in general, see Michael Polanyi, Personal Knowledge: Towards A Post-Critical Philosophy (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), pp. 49-65.

[25]Ornstein and Naranjo, Psychology of Meditation, p. 179.

[26]Ibid., pp. 179-180.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Ibid., p. 177.

[29]Ibid., p. 178.

[30]Ibid., p. 181. See also Gibson, Perceptual Learning and Development, pp. 105-108.

[31]Ornstein and Naranjo, Psychology of Meditation, p. 182.

[32]Ibid., p. 180.

[33]Albert H. Hastorf and Hadley Cantril, "They Saw a Game: A Case Study," in The Nature of Human Consciousness, ed. Robert Ornstein (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman and Co., 1973), p. 194.

[34]Ibid., p. 192.

[35]Gibson, Perceptual Learning and Development, p. 124, see pp. 121-123 passim.

[36]Hasdorf and Cantril, "They Saw a Game," pp. 191-192.

[37]M. H. Segall, D. T. Campbell and M. J. Herskovits, "Cultural Differences in the Perception of Geometric Illusions," in Cross-Cultural Studies: Selected Readings, ed. D. R. Price-Williams (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1969), p. 99.

[38]J. L. M. Dawson, "Cultural and Physiological Influences Upon Spatial-perceptual Processes in West Africa," in Cross-Cultural Studies, ed. Price-Williams, pp. 161-181.

[39]R. A. Levine, "Dreams and Deeds: Achievement Motivation in Nigeria," in Cross-Cultural Studies, ed. Price-Williams, pp. 274-293.

[40]Robert Hunt, ed., Personalities and Cultures: Readings in Psychological Anthropology (Garden City, New York: The Natural History Press, 1967), p. xi. "By now it is considered axiomatic that most psychic variables, and especially much of the personality, are largely determined by cultural conditioning."

[41]Hall, Silent Language, pp. 15-30, Hall, Hidden Dimension, pp. 131-181.

[42]Hall, Hidden Dimension, p. 153.

[43]Edward T. Hall, Beyond Culture (Garden City, New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1977), pp. 71-84.

[44]Ibid., p. 79.

[45]Ibid., p. 71.

[46]Ibid., p. 43

[47]Ibid., pp. 72-73.

[48]Ibid., p. 74. Rhythms are only the first, and perhaps the most fundamental, example of this sort of learning. Language, for instance, is learned in a process of forgetting. Infants first learn to make all the sound of which humans are capable, and then forget the ones that are not meaningful in the language they are learning.

[49]Hall, Hidden Dimension, p. 2.

[50]Jacob Beck, "Perception of Surface Color," Scientific American, August 1975, pp. 62-75.

[51]Gunnar Johannson, "Visual Motion Perception," Scientific American, June 1975, pp. 76-80.

> Experimental work over the past two decades has led me to break completely with the Euclidean model and to adopt projective relations as the theoretical foundation for investigations of visual space and motion. (p. 79)

[52]Marilyn Ferguson, The Brain Revolution: The Frontiers of Mind Research (New York: Taplinger Publishing Co., 1973), p. 258.

[53]Charles T. Tart, States of Consciousness (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1975), pp. 57-62.

[54]Jean Piaget, Genetic Epistemology, trans. Eleanor Duckworth (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), p. 43.

[55]Father Thiru Guillelmus Ruddy, "Comparative Noetics" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Madras, 1978).

[56]Piaget, Genetic Epistemology, p. 77. This is exactly what we discovered in the opening to this chapter with respect to spatial reorientation. In the Ames experiments, the subject gets a different sense of her own body and its capacities along with the transformed visual field. As the field changes through active physical investigation, the body sense also changes in a congruent manner.

[57]Ornstein and Naranjo, Psychology of Meditation, p. 189.

[58]Ittelson and Kilpatrick, "Experiments in Perception," p. 184.

[59]Barbara B. Brown, New Mind, New Body: Bio-feedback - New Directions for the Mind (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1974). Dr. Brown is Chief of Experimental Physiology at the Veteran's Administration Hospital in Sepulveda and a lecturer in the Department of Psychiatry at UCLA Medical Center.

[60]Ibid., pp. 164-165.

[61]Ibid., pp. 197-262.

[62]Ibid., pp. 263-299.

[63]Ibid., p. 181.

[64]Leo V. DiCara, "Learning in the Autonomic Nervous System," in Nature of Human Consciousness, ed. Ornstein, pp. 355-375.

[65]Ornstein and Naranjo, Psychology of Meditation, p. 220.

[66]Ibid.

[67]Brown, New Mind, New Body, p. 217.

[68]Ibid., p. 315.

[69]Ornstein and Naranjo, Psychology of Meditation, p. 216.

[70]Ibid., p. 217.

[71]Ibid., p. 222.

[72]Brown, New Mind, New Body, p. 10. See also Ralph Ezios, "Implications of Physiological Feedback Training," in Nature of Human Consciousness, ed. Ornstein, pp. 376-387.

[73]Ferguson, Brain Revolution, pp. 32-45; Brown, New Mind, New Body, pp. 191-299 passim.

[74]Ferguson, Brain Revolution, p. 43, see pp. 43-44. This is not to symbolize disease as moral evil or emotional maladjustment. Moral evil could just as well be symbolized as organic disease. The point is that they are connected, not that one is the cause of another.

[75]Brown, New Mind, New Body, p. 205.

[76]Ibid., pp. 200-202.

[77]Ornstein and Naranjo, Psychology of Meditation, p. 218.

[78]Hall, Beyond Culture, pp. 71-84.

[79]Ibid. "Clearly then, how we manage our own interior and exterior beings is governed by culture and a consensus or reality." (Brown, New Mind, New Body, p. 217).

[80]Ferguson, Brain Revolution, p. 260.

[81]Brown, New Mind, New Body, pp. 153-154.

[82]Ferguson, Brain Revolution, p. 38.

[83]Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology of Perception, p. 206.

[84]Ibid., p. 205.

[85]Ferguson, Brain Revolution, pp. 26-27, p. 28.

[86]Ornstein and Naranjo, Psychology of Meditation, p. 232.

[87]R. J. Wurtman, "Effect of Light on the Human Body," Scientific American, July 1975, pp. 68-77; Ferguson, Brain Revolution, pp. 22, 23.

[88]Ornstein and Naranjo, Psychology of Meditation, p. 232. See also Gay Luce, "Biological Rhythms," in Nature of Human Consciousness, ed. Ornstein, pp. 421-444.

FOOTNOTES

BOOK 1

Chapter III

[1]Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology of Perception, vii. See also Edmund Husserl, Ideas: A General Introduction to Phenomenology, trans. W. R. Boyce-Gibson (New York: Collier Books, 1962), pp. 115-117; and Richard M. Zaner, The Way of Phenomenology: Criticism as a Philosophical Discipline (Indianapolis: Pegasus, a division of Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1970), p. 157.

[2]I first ran across the notion that each entity in the universe "feels" every other in Whitehead's work. He also uses the term "feeling." See Alfred North Whitehead, Process and Reality: An Essay in Cosmology (New York: The Free Press, 1969), p. 28.

[3]Piaget, Genetic Epistemology, p. 41.

[4]Ibid., pp. 41-57.

[5]"The ultimate significance of the origin of life is the appearance in the cosmos of a system that by inductive processes passes on to its species as encoded in its DNA or RNA all that its lineage has learned." Savage, Evolution, p. 159.

[6]Of course, the interpenetration of language and experience has been a primary theme throughout this chapter. For an excellent discussion of this question and of the development of the modern linguistic model, see Frederic Jameson, The Prison-House of Language: A Critical Account of Structuralism and Russian Formalism (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), pp. 3-42.

> The transition witnessed by Saussure (Note: the founder of modern linguistics and through linguistic of both structuralism and formalism) . . . may be described as a movement from a substantive way of thinking to a relational one, a transition nowhere quite so acute as in linguistics. The discovery of Saussure was that the cause of the terminological difficulties in linguistics resulted from the fact that these

terms tried to name substances or objects (the "word," the "sentence") while linguistics was a science characterized by the absence of such substances . . .

Thus it is on account of the peculiar nature of language as an object of study that Saussure is led to strike out in a new direction. Once again, of course, the dilemma of linguistics is only part of a vaster crisis in the sciences in general: in physics for instance, where the alternation between the wave and particle theories of light begins to cast some doubt on the conception of the atom as a substance, and where indeed the idea of a "field" is not without analogies to Saussure's notion of a system. In all these areas, scientific investigation has reached the limits of perception; its objects are no longer things or organisms which are isolated by their own physical structures from each other, and which can be dissected and classified in various ways. Saussure's concept of the "system" implies that in this new trackless unphysical reality content is form; that you can see only as much as your model permits you to see; that the methodological starting point does more than simply reveal, it actually creates, the object of study. . . .

Thus, for units, entities, substances, are substituted values and relationships. . . . (pp. 13-15)

[7]Ibid., pp. 32-33.

[8]Lothar Eley, Afterword to Experience and Judgement, by Edmund Husserl, revised and edited by Ludwig Landgrebe, trans. James S. Churchill and Karl Ameriks (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), p. 425.

[9]See e.g., Pfeiffer, The Emergence of Man, p. 405.

FOOTNOTES

BOOK 1

Chapter IV

[1]Hall, Hidden Dimension, p. 2. See also Berger and Luckmann, Social Construction of Reality, pp. 47-128.

[2]Charles T. Tart, States of Consciousness (New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., 1975).

[3]Ibid., p. 54.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Ibid., p. 57, see pp. 201-228. See also Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology of Perception, p. 30.

[6]See e.g., Victor Turner, Dramas, Fields and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974), pp. 23-33.

[7]Ken Wilber, The Spectrum of Consciousness (Wheaton, Ill.: Theosophical Publishing House, 1977), p. 57.

[8]Louis J. Puhl, The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius: Based on Studies in the Language of the Autograph (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1951).

[9]See Doug Boyd, Rolling Thunder, pp. 83-121. See also John (Fire) Lame Deer and Richard Erdoes, Lame Deer, Seeker of Visions: The Life of a Sioux Medicine Man, A Touchstone Book (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1972), pp. 174-213.

[10]See, for example, Benjamin D. Paul, "Mental Disorder and Self-Regulating Processes in Culture: A Guatemalan Illustration," in Personalities and Cultures, ed. Robert Hunt, pp. 150-165.

[11]Alfred North Whitehead, The Function of Reason (Boston: Beacon Press, 1958), pp. 78-79; Process and Reality, pp. 59, 56-67; Science and the Modern World: Lowell Lectures 1925 (New York: Free Press, 1967), pp. 157-162.

[12]Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology of Perception, p. 430.

FOOTNOTES

BOOK 1

Chapter V

[1]Fritjoff Capra, The Tao of Physics: An Exploration of the Parallels Between Modern Physics and Eastern Mysticism (New York: Bantam Books, 1976), p. 159.

[2]Ibid., p. 125.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Ibid., p. 124.

[5]Ibid., pp. 194-195.

[6]Ibid., p. 197.

[7]Ibid., p. 208.

[8]Ibid., p. 199.

[9]Ibid., p. 252.

[10]Ibid., p. 68.

[11]Ibid., p. 69.

[12]Bernard d'Espagnat, "The Quantum Theory and Reality," Scientific American, November 1979, pp. 158-181. For a dissenting view and d'Espagnat's rebuttal, see Victor F. Weisskopf and Bernard d'Espagnat, "Letters," Scientific American, May 1980, pp. 8, 10. See also John P. Wiley, Jr., "Phenomena, Comment and Notes," Smithsonian 11 (February 1980), pp. 30-41. For an excellent discussion of the scientific problems involved and a philosophical solution of them that is on the cutting edge of current research, see David Bohm, Wholeness and the Implicate Order (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980). Unfortunately Dr. Bohm's book came out too late for me to use it in this presentation. I have, however, heard him speak, and he is both provocative and knowledgeable. Dr. Bohm is Professor of Theoretical Physics at Birbeck College in London.

[13]This model was developed by Dr. Karl Pribram at Stanford University. I heard Dr. Pribram present his ideas in a seminar at a conference entitled "Philosophy, Where Are You?" at the Dominican College in San Rafael, CA., in June, 1979. A good place to begin studying the holonomic model of memory is Dr. Pribram's article, "The Neurophysiology of Remembering," Scientific American, January 1969.

[14]d'Espagnat, "Quantum Theory and Reality," p. 181.

[15]Capra, Tao of Physics, p. 298.

[16]Ibid.

[17]Bateson, Ecology of Mind, p. 462.

[18]Ibid., p. 463.

FOOTNOTES

BOOK 2

Introduction

[1]The books listed here take different perspectives on the contemporary cultural crisis. Odum is strictly concerned with ecological degradations, while Laing focuses on psychological issues to the exclusion of others. Marcuse is primarily a political theorist, though he makes use of both ecological and psychological material. Habermas resembles Marcuse in this respect, while Bateson and Roszak are more generalist in their approach. Baran and Sweeney provide a Marxist critique of the American economy, while Schumacher develops a critique based on what I can only call the ancient ethical values. Finally I refer you to the poems of William Blake, perhaps the first man to see into the soul of Industrial Culture. David Erdman's study of Blake is first-rate in helping the reader to grasp Blake's insight. Lame Deer and Rolling Thunder provide a Native American perspective. This list does not even begin to dent the excellent written material criticizing some aspect or the totality of contemporary culture, which is the main point of this exercise.

Paul A. Baran and Paul M. Sweeney, Monopoly Capital: An Essay on the American Economic Order (New York: Modern Reader Paperbacks, 1966); Bateson, Mind and Nature, Ecology of Mind; Boyd, Rolling Thunder; David V. Erdman, Blake: Prophet Against Empire - A Poet's Interpretation of the History of His Own Times, Revised Edition (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books/Doubleday, 1969); Habermas, Communication and Evolution of Society: Legitimation Crisis, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975); Toward a Rational Society, trans. Jeremy Shapiro (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970); R. D. Laing, The Politics of Experience (New York: Ballantine Books, 1967); Lame Deer and Erdoes, Lame Deer; Marcuse, One Dimensional Man, Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud (New York: Vintage Books, a division of Random House, 1955); Odum, Fundamentals of Ecology; Theodore Roszak, Person/Planet: The Creative Disintegration of Industrial Culture (Garden City, New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1978); Where the Wasteland Ends: Politics and Transcendence in Post-Industrial Society (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books/Doubleday, 1973); E. F. Schumacher, A Guide for the Perplexed (New York: Harper Colophon Books, Harper and Row, Publishers, 1977); Good Work (New York: Harper Colophon Books, Harper and Row, Publishers, 1979); Small Is Beautiful: Economics As If People Mattered (New York: Perennial Library, Harper and Row, Publishers, 1973).

[2]Otto Eissfeldt, The Old Testament: An Introduction, trans. Peter R. Achroyd (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1965), p. 198.

[3]Martin Noth, The History of Israel, 2nd Ed. (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1960), pp. 121-127.

FOOTNOTES

BOOK 2

Chapter I

[1]Joan V. Bondurant, Conquest of Violence: The Ghandian Philosophy of Conflict, Revised Ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), p. 34, see also pp. 230-233.

[2]John P. Brantner, "Death and the Self," in Death Education: Preparation for Living, ed. Betty R. Green and Donald P. Irish (Cambridge, Mass: Schenkman Publishing, 1971), p. 15.

[3]Ibid., pp. 24-27. This point is made repeatedly in the literature on death and dying.

[4]Donald P. Irish, "Death Education: Preparation for Living," in Death Education, ed. Green and Irish, pp. 45-46.

[5]Avery D. Weisman, On Dying and Denying: A Psychiatric Study of Terminality, with a Foreword by Herman Feifel (New York: Behavioral Publications, 1972), p. 14.

[6]Ibid., p. 205.

[7]Ibid., p. 225.

[8]Robert Kastenbaum and Ruth Aisenberg, The Psychology of Death (New York: Springer Publishing Co., 1972), p. 105.

[9]See Kastenbaum and Aisenberg, Psychology of Death, pp. 81-89; Irish, "Death Education," pp. 47-62; Daniel Leviton, "The Role of Schools in Providing Death Education," in Death Education, ed. Green and Irish, pp. 32-40.

[10]Herman Feifel, "The Meaning of Death in American Society," in Death Education, ed. Green and Irish, p. 12.

[11]Boyd, Rolling Thunder, p. 202.

[12]Chuang-tze, Chuang-tze: Basic Writings, p. 113.

[13]Ibid., pp. 80-81.

[14]Savage, Evolution, p. 162.

[15]Talcott Parsons, Renee C. Rox, and Victor M. Lidz, "The 'Gift of Life' and Its Reciprocation," in Death in American Experience, ed. Arien Mack (New York: Schocken Books, 1973), p. 3.

[16]For "passivity" in Taoist literature see Chuang-tze, Chuang-tze and Lao-tze, The Book of Tao, throughout.

> the way
> the way
> the way
> things are
> is
> is
> is
> Tao.

[17]Bateson, Ecology of Mind, p. 124.

[18]Ibid., p. 18.

[19]Ibid., p. 486.

[20]See Erik H. Erikson, Gandhi's Truth: On the Origins of Militant Non-Violence (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1969), pp. 229-245; Mohandas K. Ghandi, An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments with Truth, trans. Mahadev Desai (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957), pp. 219-222, 277, 319-321.

[21]Bondurant, p. vii.

[22]Ibid., p. v.

[23]Ibid., p. 43.

> Experience has taught me that civility is the most difficult part of Satyagraha. Civility does not here mean the mere outward gentleness of speech cultivated for the occasion, but an inborn gentleness and desire to do the opponent good. These should show themselves in every act of a Satyagrahi. (Gandhi, Autobiography, p. 437)

[24]Bondurant, Conquest of Violence, pp. 119, 15-26; Gandhi, Autobiography, pp. 348-350, 500-502.

[25]Bondurant, p. 28.

[26]Ibid., p. 33. See also Gandhi, Autobiography, pp. 348-350, 500-502.

[27]Bondurant, p. 25.

[28]Ibid., p. 193.

[29]Erikson, Gandhi's Truth, pp. 435-440, see also pp. 229-245.

FOOTNOTES

BOOK 2

Chapter II

[1]Hall, Hidden Dimension, p. 2.

[2]For discussions of this question see Ignace Feuerlicht, Alienation: From the Past to the Future, Contributions in Philosophy, no. 11 (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1978), pp. 3-17; Joachim Israel, Alienation From Marx to Modern Society: A Macrosociological Analysis (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1979), pp. 258-342; Frank Johnson, "Alienation: Some Concluding Observations," in Alienation: Concept, Term, and Meaning, ed. Frank Johnson (New York: Seminar Press, a subsidiary of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, 1973), pp. 369-384.

[3]Feuerlicht, Alienation, p. viii. "Alienation originally meant separation. . . ."

Alienation is almost always dicussed in terms of what it is that the person or people are alienated from. The second scale, seldom discussed, is who or what is held to be responsible for the alienation. For instance, original sin or false consciousness belong to this scale and belong to fundamentalist Christians and fundamentalist Marxists, respectively. Marxists, as a group, have looked at the question of who is blamed, because it is necessary, in a Marxist context, to get the "revolutionary classes" to understand their situation in a particular way - as the result of the class structure of society. However ideological this programme may be, it is certainly true that people in some segments of society may be alienated due to socio-cultural factors that favor other segments of the society economically and politically.

[4]Henry L. Minton, "Alienation and Violence: Dimensions of the Problem," in Alienation and Violence in the North-American Community: Proceedings of the 13th Annual University of Windsor Seminar on Canadian-American Relations Held at the University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, ed. J. Alex Murray (Windsor, Ontario: University of Windsor Press, 1971), p. 7.

[5]Israel, Alienation, p. 259.

[6]Israel (ibid.) raises two other objections to the term: (1) that "value" premises implicit in such a concept must be "realistic" in the sense that "each idea about how man (sic) ought to be should be based on an objective evaluation of the actual possibilities for his development. Such an objective evaluation is possible only on the basis of reliable information about how man actually is" (p. 260) and (2) "theories concerning man's (sic) alienation usually presuppose assumptions or theories concerning conflicts, or contradictions, between the individual and society. These contradictions are usually considered to be antagonistic." (p. 267)

Certainly I am not assuming fundamental conflict between the individual and society, and certainly I agree with the proposition that what ought come about can only be known through knowledge of what is. Nonetheless, I find "alienation" to be a useful concept. I can only assume that Israel arrives at his conclusions because he traces the use of the term from Marx to modern Sociology, and in that tradition his remarks may well hold true, as his book tends to show. Let us not, however, throw out the baby with the bath water.

[7]Bateson, Ecology of Mind, pp. 462-463.

[8]Capra, Tao of Physics, p. 298.

[9]Laing, Politics of Experience, p. 119.

[10]Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology of Perception, pp. 140-141. See p. 149.

[11]Ibid, p. 148.

[12]Ibid., p. 100.

[13]Ibid., p. 101. Even "out of body" experiences obtain their primary orientation from the body. Moreover, they retain the structure of embodiment, with both "here and now" and also orientation to above and below, in front and behind, etc.

[14]Ibid., p. 332.

[15]Ibid., p. 333.

[16]Ibid.

[17]Ibid., p. 421.

[18]Ibid., p. 143.

[19]Ibid., p. 144.

[20]As well as referring to those sources provided in the Introduction, the skeptical reader might refer to Hall, Beyond Culture, for a discussion of culture and its effects on the world situation, and to the MIT study group's The Limits to Growth: Report to the Club of Rome, which presents a future scenario, based on specific assumptions about the actual limits of world resources and developed in quantiative terms over time.

[21]This raises the interesting question of how it is possible for an individual to have a critical perspective on his own culture, and, specifically, how you and I can have such a perspective on our culture. I am aware of three explanations which are mutually compatible. One of them is presented by Hall in Beyond Culture, another by Habermas in Legitimation Crisis, and the third I developed independently.

Hall comments:

> . . . it is not possible to adequately describe a culture solely from the inside or from the outside without reference to the other. Bio-cultural people and culture-contact situations enhance the opportunity for comparison. Two other situations that expose the culture's hidden structure are when one is raising the young and is forced to explain things, and when traditional cultural institutions begin to crumble as they are now doing. (p. 222)

Hall presents three sources of cultural insight. Though cross-cultural experience is possible at any time, it is probably more prevalent now, world-wide, than at any other time in history. The contemporary crumbling of traditional culture, though not unique, enhances that potential source of insight. Only child-raising is a universal cultural function. Habermas develops an image more specifically tied to the present.

His argument is too long to present in detail here, but the main points are as follows:

1. Modern capitalism depends on its participant's holding values and motivations that were originally generated by pre-bourgeois social and cultural structures and upon which capitalism was built. In particular, for the economic-political steering system to be effective, basic motivations such as possessive individualism and familial privatism must be produced;

2. The development of "post-modern" capitalism has adversely affected those institutions which engendered those values and motivations (such as the family and the church);

3. Therefore motivation, value and legitimation are in short supply in the relationship between the steering functions and the population.

As the rewards that the steering function commands become less and less linked to effective values and motivations, steering becomes erratic and ineffective and contradiction and conflict come to the fore.

I haven't the space here to discuss the adequacy of this model, although I am basically in sympathy to it. In any case, its general form is plausible. Critical distance between a culture and its populace could be opened up in a process whereby institutions destroy the base of value and motivation upon which they rely for their legitimation. This is particularly plausible if those values and motivations were engendered in a culture that existed prior to the development of the (purportedly) destructive institutions and upon which they were built.

The third idea is my own. It seems to me that certain conceptual discoveries made in my parents' generation have become part of the direct experience of at least part of my generation. In particular, I think both the new physics of the 20th century and the new social science are involved.

When I was ten years old, in 1959, I knew that I was being socialized. I knew that matter and energy were equivalent and that particles are waves. (The day Einstein died, the kids on my elementary school playground cried.)

Social science has popularized awareness of the role of culture in constructing personality and personal belief systems. Physics has popularized awareness of the transformation of fundamental elements of the universe one into another and awareness that Newtonian assumptions are no longer valid. Having these beliefs in the air and in the newspapers, radios and televisions of my childhoods has had an effect on the structure of my experience, and I dare say on that of others of my peers.

[22]Hunt, Personalities and Cultures, p. xi. By now is it considered axiomatic that most psychic variables, and especially much of the personality, are largely determined by cultural conditioning.

[23]Hazel Henderson in a speech to an International Conference on Religion, the Arts, Architecture and the Environment, for a Re-birth of Imaginative Vision, June, 1977 in San Antonio, Texas.

[24]See, e.g., Briarpatch Community, The Briarpatch Book: Experiences in Right Livelihood and Simple Living (San Francisco: New Glide Publications, 1978); Farallones Institute Staff, The Integral Urban House: Self-Reliant Living in the City (San Francisco: Sierra

Club Books, 1979); Findhorn Community, Findhorn Garden (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1975); Nora Harlow, Sharing the Children: Village Child Rearing in the City (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1976); Carl Hess, Community Technology (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1979); Eric Rainey, Shared Houses, Shared Lives (Los Angeles: J.P. Tarcher, 1979). One journal of community life is still active: Mikki Wering edits Communities: Journal of Cooperative Living. Their mailing address is Box 426, Louisa, VA 23093.

[25]Duane Elgin and Arnold Mitchell, "Voluntary Simplicity (3)," Co-Evolution Quarterly, 14 (Summer 1967), p. 5.

[26]Ibid., p. 8.

[27]Ibid., p. 10.

[28]George W. Cox and Michael D. Atkins, Agricultural Ecology: An Analysis of World Food Production Systems (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman & Co., 1979), p. 272.

[29]Ibid., p. 356.

[30]Ibid., p. 357.

[31]Ibid., pp. 283-284.

[32]Richard Foster Flint and Brian J. Skinner, Physical Geology (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1974), pp. 164-165.

[33]Schumacher, Small Is Beautiful, pp. 119, 121.

[34]Ibid., pp. 119-120.

[35]Ibid., p. 120.

[36]Stuart Brand, The Next Whole Earth Catalog: Access to Tools (New York: Random House, 1980); Godfrey Boyle and Peter Harper, eds., Radical Technology (New York: A Pantheon Book, Random House, 1976); Editors of RAIN, RAINBOOK: Resources for Appropriate Technology (New York: Schocken Books, 1977); Farallones Institute Staff, The Integral Urban House; Hess, Community Technology; James Lawrence, ed., The Harrowsmith Sourcebook: Canada's National Compendium of Alternative Tools, Goods and Services (Camden East, Ontario: Camden House Publishing Co., 1979); John Todd and Nancy Jack Todd, Tomorrow Is Our Permanent Address (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1980); Nancy Jack Todd, ed., The Book of the New Alchemists (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1977).

[37]Odum, Fundamentals of Ecology, p. 406.

[38]Richard L. Meier, Planning For An Urban World: The Design of Resource-Conserving Cities (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 1974), pp. 435-442.

[39]See Angelina Gennino, "Why Hunger?" Co-Evolution Quarterly, 28 (Winter 1980), pp. 134-135 for basic information on food production and distribution and a bibliography. She notes:

> Enough grain is produced in the world to provide everyone with ample protein and 3000 calories a day, about the caloric intake of the average American. . . . Note that this 3000-calorie estimate does not include any of the beans, root crops, fruits, nuts, vegetables, and non-grain-fed meat produced. . . . (p. 135)
>
> . . . large landholders are the least productive. In a cross section of countries studied, they consistently harvest lower yields per acre than the smallest farmers. . . . Moreover, many large landholders who hold land as an investment, not as the source of their food, leave considerable amounts unplanted. (p. 135)

[40]Elgin and Mitchell, "Voluntary Simplicity (3)," p. 5.

[41]Ibid., p. 6.

[42]Ibid.

[43]Schumacher, Guide for the Perplexed, p. 140.

[44]All of the sources listed in this chapter with respect to collective living and with respect to ecological appropriateness are relevant to this question. You might also want to look at Schumacher's Small Is Beautiful, pp. 272-293, for a discussion of one alternate model for ownership in a western industry.

For an excellent collection of essays, see Herman E. Daly, ed., Economics, Ecology, Ethics: Essays Toward a Steady-state Economy (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman and Co., 1980).

[45]Schumacher, Small Is Beautiful, p. 297.

[46]This is a central point raised by Christopher Jenks and David Reissman in their Inequality: A Reassessment of the Effect of Family and Schooling in America (New York: Basic Books, 1972) in which they conclude that schools must be evaluated in terms of the "quality of life" of the people who study, teach and work there.

[47]Berger and Luckmann, Social Construction of Reality, p. 158. See pp. 153-181.

[48]Ibid., p. 156.

[49]Ibid., p. 157.

[50]Ibid., p. 159.

[51]Ibid., p. 152.

[52]Ibid., p. 159.

[53]Hall, Beyond Culture, p. 222.

[54]Odum, Fundamentals of Ecology, p. 432.

[55]Cox and Atkins, Agricultural Ecology, pp. 356-357. They note, however, that the processes at work in the sub-Sahara have rendered other lands damaged beyond reclamation, and they may soon do so in the sub-Saharan region as well.

[56]Meier, Planning for an Urban World, p. 262.

[57]Ibid., p. 263.

FOOTNOTES

BOOK 2

Chapter III

[1]Ram Dass, The Only Dance There Is (Garden City, New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1974), p. 127.

[2]Phillip Kapleau, ed., The Three Pillars of Zen (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), p. 127.

[3]Frits Staal, Exploring Mysticism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), p. 123.

[4]Victor W. Turner, The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual (Ithaca: Cornell Paperbacks, Cornell University Press, 1967), pp. 101-102.

[5]See, for example, Roberto Assagioli, Psychosynthesis: A Manual of Principles and Techniques (New York: The Viking Press, 1965); Peter L. Berger, The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday & Co., 1969); Emile Durkheim, The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life, trans. Joseph Ward Swain (New York: The Free Press, 1915); Mircea Eliade, "Methodological Remarks on the Study of Religious Symbolism," in The History of Religions: Essays in Methodology, ed. Mircea Eliade and Joseph M. Kitagawa (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959), pp. 86-107; Sigmund Freud, The Future of an Illusion, trans. W. D. Robson-Scott, revised and edited by James Strachey (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday & Co., 1964); Claude Levi-Strauss, The Savage Mind (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966); Thomas Luckmann, The Invisible Religion: The Problem of Religion in Modern Society (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1967); Carl Gustav Jung, Psychology and Religion (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1938); Abraham H. Maslow, The Farther Reaches of Human Behavior (New York: The Viking Press, 1971); Victor W. Turner, The Ritual Process: Structure & Anti-Structure (Chicago: Alding Publishing Co., 1969).

[6]See Turner, Forest of Symbols, pp. 151-184, for the story of the field forces surrounding the performance of one boy's puberty ceremony.

[7]W. T. Stace, Mysticism and Philosophy (London: MacMillan Press, LTD, 1960).

[8]Ibid., pp. 251-306.

[9]Ibid., p. 131; Staal, Exploring Mysticism, p. 169. See Wilber, Spectrum of Consciousness, p. 57.

[10]Tarthang Tulku, Time, Space, Knowledge (Emeryville, CA: Dharma Publishig, 1977), p. XXXIX:

> . . . we can learn to see the playfulness of all situations; we can open to the natural tendency of our energies to flow toward the exploration of understanding and beauty - toward the deeper values of humanity.
>
> . . . We can then directly experience our Being, which expresses itself as a dynamic and complete freedom. In this way we can discover what it means to be truly human.

J. Krishnamurti, The Flight of the Eagle (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1971):

> (There is) one fundamental problem and this is whether the human mind, which is so heavily conditioned, can change. Not in some future incarnation, nor at the end of life, but change radically now . . . (p. 51)
>
> If you merely want wider, deeper experiences but lead a shoddy, meaningless life, then you will have experiences that won't be worth anything. (p. 54)

[11]Wilber, Spectrum of Consciousness, p. 57.

[12]Meister Eckhart, Meister Eckhart, trans. Raymond B. Blackney (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1941), p. 76; Kapleau, The Three Pillars of Zen, pp. 273-291; A. K. Taimni, The Science of Yoga (Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1965). See Wilber, Spectrum of Consciousness, pp. 160-194.

[13]Arthur J. Deikman, "Deautomatization and the Mystic Experience," in The Nature of Human Consciousness, ed. Robert Ornstein, pp. 216-234.

[14]Ornstein and Naranjo, On the Psychology of Meditation, p. 210.

[15]Ibid., pp. 210-212. See pp. 191-212.

[16]Ibid., pp. 198, 194.

[17]Ibid., p. 196.

[18]Ibid.

[19]Silverman, "Analogues of 'Experience' In Schizophrenics and LSD" in Fadiman and Kewman, eds., Exploring Madness, p. 164.

[20]Ibid.

[21]Ibid., p. 155.

[22]Ferguson, Brain Revolution, p. 22.

[23]Wurtman, R. J., "Effect of Light on the Human Body," Scientific American, 133 (July, 1975), pp. 68-77.

[24]Ferguson, Brain Revolution, p. 26.

[25]Ornstein and Naranjo, Psychology of Meditation, p. 232.

[26]Claudio Naranjo, The Healing Journey: New Approaches to Consciousness (New York: Pantheon Books, a division of Random House, 1973), p. 17.

[27]Stanislaus Grof, Realms of the Human Unconscious: Observations from LSD Research (New York: D. P. Dutton & Co., 1976), pp. 24-25.

[28]Ibid., p. 155.

[29]Ibid., p. 177.

[30]Ibid., pp. 156-205.

[31]Ibid., p. 203.

[32]Ibid., p. 205.

[33]Ibid.

[34]Ibid., p. 237.

[35]Ibid., p. 21.

[36]Ibid., p. 25.

[37]Ibid., p. 237.

[38]Wilber, Spectrum of Consciousness, pp. 117-119.

[39]Ibid., pp. 199-200.

[40]Ibid., p. 200.

[41]Ibid., pp. 160-194.

[42]Ibid., pp. 15-104.

[43]Krishnamurti, Flight of the Eagle, p. 49.

[44]Ibid., p. 34.

[45]Ibid., p. 69.

[46]Vine Deloria, Jr., The Metaphysics of Modern Existence (San Francisco: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1979), p. 156.

[47]Meditation Class taught at the Nyingma Institute for Tibetan Buddhism in Berkeley, California, Spring, 1976, Tarthang Tulku Rinpoche, Professor.

[48]Deloria, Metaphysics of Modern Existence, p. 158.

[49]Vine Deloria, Jr., God Is Red (New York: A Delta Book, Dell Publishing Co., 1973), p. 8.

[50]Ibid., pp. 5-11.

[51]Malcolm Margolin, The Ohlone Way: Indian Life in the San Francisco-Monterey Bay Area (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1978), p. 157.

[52]Boyd, Rolling Thunder, p. 9.

[53]Ibid., p. 102.

[54]Ibid., p. 81.

[55]Bateson, Mind and Nature, pp. 151-154.

[56]Deloria, Metaphysics of Modern Existence, pp. 153-154.

[57]Lame Deer and Erdoes, Lame Deer, pp. 162-173.

[58]Ibid., p. 163.

[59]Deloria, God Is Red, p. 104.

[60]Ibid, p. 160.

[61]Ibid.

[62]Wilber, Spectrum of Consciousness, p. 73.

[63]Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology of Perception, p. 430.

FOOTNOTES

AFTERWORD

[1]Wilber, Spectrum of Consciousness, p. 56.

[2]Ibid., p. 64.

[3]Ibid., p. 58.

[4]As Rollo May says: "The traditional doctrine, so limiting, self-contradictory . . . (is) that the less we are involved in a given situation, the more clearly we can observe the truth. The implication of that doctrine was, obviously enough, that there is an inverse relation between involvement and our capacity to observe without bias . . . we overlooked another one of its clear implications, namely that he will most successfully discover truth who is not the slightest bit interested in it!" Rollo May, Ernest Angel, and Henri R. Ellenberger, eds., Existence (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1958), p. 27.

[5]Yi-Fu Tuan, Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1974), pp. 10-11, 20, also 245.

[6]Ibid., p. 8.

[7]Hall, Beyond Culture, p. 44.

[8]Ibid., p. 52. See also p. 222.

[9]Ibid., p. 44. See p. 165.

[10]See Hall, Hidden Dimension, Silent Language, Beyond Culture.

[11]Wilber, Spectrum of Consciousness, p. 70.

[12]Odum, Fundamentals of Ecology, pp. 21-33, 270.

[13]The distinction between power and authority is classic in political theory. Power is control over others ultimately gained by the threat of force, or through negligence. Authority is leadership accorded through the respect of the community being led.

[14]Bateson, Ecology of Mind, p. 463.

[15]Aldous Huxley, The Doors of Perception and Heaven and Hell (New York: Harper Colophon Books, Harper and Row, Publishers, 1963).

[16]Victor Turner has conducted a thorough study of the structure of rituals, of the role of ritual in society, and of the nature of primary ritual symbols. All of this is useful practical information for investigations in community life and ritual formation. I can only briefly touch on his work here. I refer the reader to: Victor Turner, Forest of Symbols (FS) and Ritual Process (RP); also Victor Turner, Dramas, Fields and Metaphors (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1974) (DFM).

Symbols. Turner, in a phrase that could practically define mutual self creation, says "The symbol is an independent force which is itself a product of many opposed forces" (FS, p. 45). He shows:

> How symbols are dynamic entities, not static cognitive signs, how they are patterned by events and informed by the passion of human intercourse, in friendship, sexuality, and politics, and how paradigms, bodied forth in clusters and sequences of symbols, mediate for men (sic) between ideals and action in social fields (DFM, p. 96).

In rituals, Turner distinguishes between two sorts of symbols, dominant and instrumental. Dominant symbols display a high degree of constancy throughout the ritual network and tend to express fundamental values of the widest social field. They symbolize the whole society paradigmatically. Instrumental symbols change their meaning from situation to situation.

He notes the following properties of dominant symbols:

> The simplest property is that of condensation. Many things and actions are represented in a single formation. Secondly, a dominant symbol is a unification of disparate significata. The disparate significata are interconnected by virtue of their common possession of analogous qualities or by association in fact or thought . . . the third important property of dominant symbols is polarization of meaning. At one pole is found a cluster of significata that refer to components of the moral and social orders . . . At the other pole, the significata are usually natural and physiological phenomena and processes.

Social Structures and Ritual. Turner sees society as consisting of two distinct forms. One is the structure - the system of roles, power hierarchies and so forth that dominate daily life. The other is the communitas the group of essentially undifferentiated human equals.

> Essentially, communitas is a relationship between concrete, historical, idiosyncratic individuals. These individuals are not segmentalized into roles and statuses but confront one another rather in the manner of Martin Buber's I and thou. (RP p. 119)

He correlates this relation with a social state he calls "liminality" (betweeness). Turner discovered this state in the middle section of tribal rites of passage (FS p. 93-112). He has since found "liminal" conditions in structural outsiderhood (such as untouchability) and in marginality (such as artists) (DFM, pp. 231-271). Liminality refers to the status-less condition of the person. One who is "between states" at a rite-of-passage is the archetypal liminar - at once "not yet a woman" while "no longer a girl." Analogously those who are outside of or underneath the structure can be seen as "without social status."

Communitas - a relationship in which people encounter one another outside social structural definitions - is correlated with liminality - a social state in which people exist without social status.

> Communitas breaks in through the interstices of structure in liminality; at the edges of structure, in marginality; and from beneath structure, in inferiority. It is almost everywhere held to be sacred, or "holy." (RP 115)
>
> Communitas has an existential quality; it involves the whole man (sic) in his relation to other whole men. (RP 114)
>
> (It is) a transformative experience that goes to the root of each person's being and finds in that root something profoundly communal and shared. (RP, p. 126)

There is a set of values that seem to accompany the communitas relationship. Turner finds a regular connection between liminality/communitas and:

> such universal human values as peace and harmony between all men, fertility, health of mind and body, universal justice, comradeship and brotherhood between all men, the equality before God, the law or the life force of men and women, young and old, and persons of all races and ethnic groups. (RP, p. 122)

It is interesting to note that Turner developed these ideas first in relation to tribal ritual. He discovered a regular <u>form</u> to these rituals: a first phase of separation from the society, a middle phase of liminality in which the main content of the ritual is performed, and a final phase of reintegration into society. He sees this as the prime form and the main function of ritual.

Turner's linkage of liminality, communitas and spiritual values is not a theological judgment reducing one to another. In fact, Turner proposes: "Communitas, however, is not structure with the signs reversed, minuses instead of pluses, but rather the fons et origo of all structures, and, at the same time, their critique" (DFM 202). It provides this critique because:

> The ultimate desideratum . . . is to act in terms of communitas values even while playing structural roles, where what one culturally does is conceived of as merely instrumental to the aim of attaining and maintaining communitas. (RP, p. 167)

He sees a veritable need for people to escape our role-bound positions and to achieve communitas, postulating that repressed communitas eventually bursts its bounds in revolutionary action (DFM 110-112, 122-123, 240-256).

Depending on one's outlook, Turner has either "found the social sources of spiritual experience," or he has discovered the social form of spiritual experience.

His work seems to me to be of the utmost significance to the process discussed in the afterword. The whole phenomenon of an alternate culture is liminal, and the concept of ensemble is an image of communitas. Furthermore, Turner's insights into the structure of ritual and ritual symbols is very helpful to anyone trying to develop functional community ritual.

[17]Tuan, Topophilia, p. 11.

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